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THE CHURCH'S
MINISTRY OF HEALING

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

SPIRITUAL HEALING :

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THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY OF HEALING

BY THE REV.

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PREFACE

THE object in view in gathering these papers together is to afford the student of Spiritual Healing some material from which to form a constructive idea of its place and meaning in Christian experience. It is for this reason that some papers are included which bear only indirectly on the main subject. Dr. Tennant, in his recent lectures on "Miracle and its Philosophical Presuppositions," reminds us that "laws presuppose facts, not facts laws," and these papers are an attempt to trace the laws which underlie the facts of this particular enquiry. Every serious student will value criticism which helps to clear his vision or to test his conclusions, but in some recent criticisms of the subject the need of offering explanations seems to have obscured the necessity of attempting to trace or to formulate the law which may be at work.

The study of Spiritual Healing is not an easy matter, nor one to be lightly undertaken. The papers here offered cannot pretend to do more than indicate lines upon which further investigation may move, but they cover a much longer period of study and practice than is indicated by their dates. It will be seen that the interpretation offered of the

fact of Spiritual Healing is sacramental, and the laws which govern its operation would therefore be sought within this sphere. The only alternatives to this are the magical theory or the suggestion theory, both of which are being pressed at the present time as a sufficient answer to the challenge of growing experience. But neither of them can find place as an adequate explanation of what is involved in the Divine Incarnation, and to the writer of these papers, Spiritual Healing is so involved. If it be regarded as within the proper work of the Church, it may and should be tested by all possible means within her system. If, on the other hand, it be thought of as a particular phase of twentieth century adventure, or, conversely, as a retrogression in religious thought, there do not appear to be any genuine criteria by which to test it at the moment.

The first six papers are lectures recently delivered in London. The other papers have been written at various times for the Guild of S. Raphael, and I am grateful to the Guild for permission to use them in compiling this little volume.

J. R. PRIDIE.

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THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY OF HEALING

I. THE BACKGROUND

S. John x. 10: "I am come that they might have more abundant life."

"I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly" (R. V.).

IN considering the subject of Spiritual Healing it is of the greatest importance that we should first see the background of the picture. A great disservice is done when we so far isolate Spiritual Healing from the rest of Christian experience that it seems to stand by itself. That is untrue in any other department of the Christian life. It is to throw other things into the shade and to concentrate thought upon one particular event or experience which in fact only finds its real value from its relation to other events or experiences. And it is just as dangerous and untrue to regard Spiritual Healing as a thing by itself. It tends to-day, even more than some other parts of Christian experience, to throw not only itself but other things out of focus if the emphasis upon it be too strongly stressed. The

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nemesis of so doing is that it comes to be regarded as a kind of esoteric cult and to be criticized accordingly. We who believe it to be a part of the revelation of the Divine will must be very anxious to avoid any action or any line of thought which would seem to justify any such conclusion.

What then is the background of our thought to be? It must be something broader than mere human activity which might seem to justify the desire for bodily health. It must be something wider than that conception of unseen power which manifests itself in isolated actions which the world designates dispassionately miracle or magic. It must in a word be part of our conception of life in its fullest sense—that is, life in God.

And this will have its effect on our conception of the world we live in. It is easy nowadays to fall into the mechanical idea of the universe—to believe that law and order are so entirely supreme as to leave no room for any other thought. And it is easy as we grasp the consequences of this idea—an idea which seems eventually to shut God out because it shuts out personality as an originating cause to go to the opposite extreme and, as Leuba says, to use God, not to worship Him. The Christian idea of God is different from either of these, and the Christian idea of healing as part of the activity of God must share in this difference.

There is one characteristic of the Christian conception of the universe which has persisted through

all the years that have passed since the Christ came to teach us, and that is that the universe is a spiritual reality. What we see is but a symbol of reality ; the world of concepts is as real as the world of practical experience—that we can learn from ancient teachers. But the spiritual world—that is, the world of realities which cannot be measured simply by contact of the physical senses, has been given substance by the teaching of the Lord Christ, and has attained reality in Christian experience by the exercise of what the world may call credulity, but what the Christian knows as faith. And in that world of spiritual reality there are spiritual beings—bad and good—and spiritual forces—bad and good—which it is part of the Christian training to understand and to appraise. “ It is the last word in human conceit,” said the late Baron von Hügel, “ to imagine that men are the only rational beings in the universe.” With this as the background to our thought—the idea of a universe made and governed by God, who has declared Himself to be a God whose nature is love, the idea of a universe in which spiritual realities are supreme, we may go on to a further step which will bring us nearer to our particular subject. What, we may ask, are we to understand by Spiritual or Divine Healing? Here I think it is necessary to draw a distinction between the fact of Divine Healing and its manifestations. We are at once attracted by the thought of the Christ’s miracles, or by the thought of the miraculous gifts with which the Church was

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endowed at the Pentecost, or by the use to which she put those gifts. Or, especially to-day, we think of the various channels through which the Divine Healing manifests itself, whether physical, mental, or spiritual. We recognize that each of these channels of healing is governed by its own laws, and so far can, in thought at least, be separated off from the others. They act and react upon each other perhaps because they have to do with different elements in what is, in fact, one entity—man's personality. But, for all that, we realize that the method by which we learn about physical means of healing is not the same as that by which we learn about mental means of healing, nor is either of them the same as the method by which we learn about definitely spiritual means of healing. But while we draw these distinctions—and they are necessary—we must always be careful to remember, as the Lambeth Report so strongly insists—that *all* healing, of whatever sort and through whatever channel it reaches us, is spiritual in origin. It is always a manifestation of the will of God—and since the object is in every case the conquest of evil in the shape of disease and the restoration of the subject to health or wholeness, we must by that very fact recognize that the will of God is for the good of man. But we must avoid confusion. It is easy, for instance—and it is often done—to confuse *Psychical Healing*—healing, that is, by mental means—with *Spiritual Healing*. Perhaps one of the best ways to avoid this particular confusion is to

remember that psychology, whether it be concerned with healing or with other activities, is solely concerned with faculties of the human mind, and has no direct concern with that other manifestation of healing power which we designate as Spiritual or Divine Healing.

And even when we come to those particular manifestations which are associated with "Spiritual" Healing in the New Testament and in the Church, we still have to remember that in themselves they are manifestations of a fact, not the fact itself. That fact lies deeper down than all manifestations of it, as I hope we shall see as we proceed.

There is no one who has tried to formulate a satisfactory definition of Spiritual Healing but has felt the difficulty of any general definition. It is not so difficult to find a formula, but a formula is very often a weakness. And yet we ought, for the sake of clearness of thought, to try to reach some definition in order that we may know how to seek this power and how to use it, as well as to know, so far as we may, why it is given. We discard at once anything that leads to a mere health cult. That on the surface would be unsatisfying to the faith of a Christian. It would not only put the body first, but it would also seem to lead to false ideas of the purpose of the Incarnation. That seems to be the specific weakness of those present day cults with which we are all familiar. Nor will it mean anything which overrides or sets aside as valueless those material means

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by which God's healing power is so frequently given. It would almost seem an irreverence to ignore some physical remedies in favour of what might be thought the higher pursuit of spiritual power, for "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," and it has pleased Him often to give us gifts out of the treasury of His earth as well as out of the treasury of His heaven.

Perhaps we may put it shortly and say that by Spiritual Healing we understand a particular operation of that "power" with which our Lord promised (Acts i. 8) that His apostles should be endowed, and which we find at work in various ways in the Apostolic ministry. But having said this, we are aware that our definition has opened a wide field of exploration, and that there is much that we must learn to understand if we could enter into the meaning of that "power" as still part of the endowment of the Church, part of the equipment of the Christian life.

And it is clear that in order to understand the meaning and place of this whole gift of "power" as a gift to the Church for carrying on the work with which she is entrusted, the first requisite is faith. But it must be an informed and living faith. It must be measured by something greater than our own desires or our own needs. It is well to remember that while our Lord accepted the faith of those who came to Him for help, and answered it with gifts which met their needs, that was not the faith on which He expected to build His Kingdom. He never

said, " O ye of little faith " to such as came to Him in need, but He *did* say it to those whom He was training for work and life within the Kingdom.

So while we say that faith is the supreme necessity in learning about Divine Healing, let us always remember that such faith means so much more than the mere obtaining through His power things which seem to us to be desirable or necessary. It will mean at the last faith in God Himself and in His will, assured that that will is always good, and a readiness to follow that will through all its leadings. It will never under any circumstances take the guise of dictating to Him, but it will always be waiting on Him to receive what He would give in serene assurance of His goodness. And it will be a faith which is conscious of its own shortcomings if it ever accepts a position from which it refuses to go forward into new revelations of the Divine love, a position which would substitute resignation for submission and become passive instead of active in entering into His will for good.

Now, when we turn to the New Testament to learn what this faith means, we can see at once a broad distinction between what we are taught in the Gospels and what we may learn from the Epistles, and yet we can feel that there is a deep underlying unity running all through both divisions of the New Testament. Put broadly it seems to be this in the Gospels we see the *principles* on which that faith is built, in the Epistles we learn the *experience*

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of that faith in the life of the Church, the conditions of its exercise, the consequences of its use.

To begin with the Gospels, we see there One Supreme Person, the Living Christ. We learn who He was and what He taught and what He did, and we begin to understand that we are in contact with Him who is the great Revelation of God, His interpreter into terms of human life. And we learn to see a timelessness about the movements of that central life which reassures us as we think of it two thousand years after, and realize with no shock of incongruity that it is as real for us to-day as it was for those who moved with Him through the days of His flesh. It is, indeed, the great fact of the Life of God and of His attitude to men that we are studying, not as the wide horizons of an undiscovered land, but as the measure of a personal vision which is vouchsafed to us in personal contact with the Fact itself.

But our vision is not to be limited simply by things of the senses. The contact with the Christ of God calls out a new faculty in ourselves, the faculty of faith. It is not merely an attitude of mind only, it is a personal relation, and secure in that relation our faith may take on new colours of adventure or constructiveness which may make it a fit instrument in God's hand for doing God's work.

For that is precisely what we can see in the education of the Apostles' faith. The redemptive activity of the Lord Christ was not ended by His death,

nor by His resurrection or ascension. It goes on still, and the wonder is, it goes on *through men*. But it is to be noted that the character of the work does not change. The growth of faith does not change the conditions of the work, it creates a new instrument in the hand of God by which the work may be done. For us, as for S. Paul, the work as part of the whole Christian life, must be ἐν Χριστῷ in Christ, for as He Himself taught us, "Apart from Me ye can do nothing." And if we think of this we get a point of view which is of great importance in any real idea of Spiritual Healing. As the Christ's whole life on earth was distinguished as being the redemptive activity of God, so that distinguishing mark must never be absent in the Church's healing work. It is part of the redemptive work of the Lord Christ still going on. It must not be isolated from the whole life of the Church. And it will give us two thoughts of value to help us. First, however hard it may be to define evil, yet evil is a real fact from which God would deliver us, though that deliverance must be according to His will and not according to ours. Secondly, if Spiritual Healing be part of the Lord's redemptive activity, we can see clearly the ultimate motive with which it must be sought, a motive in which God's glory stands supreme and pre-eminent. It is this which must tune the minds of those who seek healing, and no less tune the minds of those who minister it, and it is this alone which must form the whole background

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of the Church's action in fulfilling this part of her sacred mission.

So then we can begin to distinguish certain facts which form the background of the Church's healing work. There are three of outstanding importance, and each of the three might be the subject of a whole theology, so vast are their ramifications. We must keep that in mind as we try humbly to learn what we may about those three facts, as we are in this special reference concerned with them. We must never forget that, as S. Augustine reminds us, "Nature as we see it is not nature as God sees it"—that is, that we can never hope to measure all the wonderful world in which we live nor its spiritual significance. But we can with complete but humble confidence go on step by step to learn what He would vouchsafe to teach us.

(a) The first of these three facts of outstanding importance to us in our work is this : God is supreme and His will is always good. That sounds like a truism, but in the world, nay, we dare to say, is the Church so really convinced of its truth that it has become a truism ? The meaning of its truth will come to you in your prayers as you try to realize in them the meaning of "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." It will grow upon you as you realize the part your faith must take in the doing of that Will. And as it grows upon you you will realize too, without confusion of mind and without fear, that that good will of God is the absolute reality

and that we move slowly towards it, from the relative condition in which we live, along the path of faith alone.

(b) And as this grows upon you you will see the second fact that evil is a real thing because it is a spiritual thing. Whether it is manifest in the moral sphere as sin, or in the physical sphere as disease, it always has the same characteristic. It destroys the harmony in which God's will, the absolute good, is wrought. It is strong, relentless, answering to its own law always—but it is not supreme, for God only is that.

And the question so often on our lips till we begin to understand—"why does God permit this or that which seems to us to be so evil?"—begins to change its tone as we realize that the evil that is in the world is so tremendously God's problem, that even He could not solve it apart from His own self-sacrifice. When once we have caught a glimpse of that great truth, then evil becomes no longer a relentless crushing force which weakens us because we are perplexed about its origin and sometimes dare to think God is responsible for it; it becomes instead something which God is slowly dispossessing of its hold on humanity, and in dispossessing it He calls on us to help Him, and when it touches us in ways in which our will and loyalty are not concerned, we learn to exchange the passive virtue of resignation for the active grace of submission, for through that grace God finds a way to lead us on to share His victory.

(c) And the third fact presents itself as an answer to the inevitable question : How can we do this—how can we presume to think that we can help to solve God's problem ? The answer we find in the New Testament is one single one all through. He works through men, but not through isolated individuals—that we can see. But do we see deeper than that ? Does not the Incarnation of the Lord Christ teach us this—that God works out His problem through human nature ? He uses human nature as the instrument of His will because it is capable of enshrining His power. In the person of the Christ that human nature was perfect, and therefore perfectly capable of responding to the demands made upon it. But we individually cannot rise to such heights as that, and yet we share that human nature which God needs for His work. Is not that the meaning of the Church ? It is the Body of Christ through which He still works. It is ideally humanity—human nature—filled with the same Holy Spirit who dwelt in His fulness in the humanity of the Lord Christ. And so God's work of redeeming mankind from evil, and thereby bringing them nearer to His absolute good will, goes on and goes forward, and each of us as members of that Body of Christ may—nay must—share in our degree in the spirit of power who dwells therein. Each member of the Church has his own part to take—that is the glory of our membership in it, for no longer can we gauge our work by individual measure, but as part of that

wonderful whole which in the end is God's will made manifest. The Church has to learn and to declare the mind of God, so that not only men but also angels may learn it, for by the Church is made known to them the manifold wisdom of God. And it is in that work of learning and declaring the depth and wonder of His redemptive activity to-day that we try to explore something of the meaning of that healing power with which, as we most humbly but most surely believe, the Master was pleased to endow His Church.

II. THE KINGDOM OF POWER

S. Matt. x. 8 : " Freely ye have received, freely give."

Acts xx. 35 : " It is more blessed to give than to receive."

WE have seen something of the background of the work of Spiritual Healing, something of the conditions in which it is to be wrought. We live in a world of spiritual reality, a world in which spiritual forces are far more real than any which can be perceived in a world of sensory impression. Dr. Fleming Stevenson thus describes it :

" There is a kingdom into which none can enter but children, in which the children play with infinite forces, where the child's little finger becomes stronger than the giant world ; a wide kingdom where the world exists only by sufferance ; to which the world's laws and developments are for ever subjected ; in which the world lies like a foolish, wilful dream in the solid truth of the day."

A beautiful comment on Christ's words : " Except ye become as little children ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."¹

We may not be able to form any deep philosophical theory of the universe—there we must humbly

¹ Quoted by Prof. A. G. Hogg in "Redemption from this World."

follow teachers who make this their special study—but we may remember that the main object of philosophy is interpretation—that it is useless to observe facts or to attempt to relate them to each other unless you go further and try to see the law which underlies them and conditions their relation. We all need some coherent theory of life, and in that degree we all need, Christians as well as others, some measure of philosophy.

The starting-point of Christian thought is that God is supreme and is supremely Love and Holiness, and everything else in life must somehow and somewhere be correlated to that great central fact. We do not see that love and holiness everywhere triumphant. We are aware of oppositions—but we are aware that they *are* oppositions and out of that very fact grows a deepening conviction that the love and holiness of God are the final and ultimate good. The Cross is the great sign of Redemption, because through it that opposition is finally conquered and dispossessed, and the Kingdom of Heaven is opened to all believers. It is a kingdom in which men are given power both to be and to do, and it is about that power that we are to think to-day. In the last instruction we saw that the great instrument through which God works His purposes for men is the instrument of faith, but that is only one side of the question. There must be something to answer this faith, and it is this “something” which is our subject to-day.

The power to do the work to which God calls us is never self-originated, it is never simply human faculties by themselves. We accept as of course to-day the teaching of evolution, whether physical or moral, as an account of the world we live in, but we do not forget that there are stages at which the purpose of evolution seems to have been merely preparatory to "the production of something fundamentally new by the exercise of sovereign originative power, altogether transcending that possessed by man"¹

The gift of man's spirit marked one of these stages, the wondrous Incarnation of the Lord marked another, the gift of the Holy Spirit marked yet a third stage in the uplifting of man's life towards God. In this last great gift we are in presence of the largest movement in God's purpose for the redemption, the freedom of man, body, soul and spirit. We must be careful to remember that the Gift of the Spirit was correlated to the Incarnation of the Christ as God's great empowering gift to human nature, for the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Christ at His Baptism, and it was from this point in time (as though to mark the necessary union of the Christ through His humanity with those whom He called to share in His work) that His disciples were to mark the beginning of their training. It was necessary to choose one to fill the vacant place in the Apostolic company from among those

¹ Driver, "Commentary on Genesis," p. 3. (Ed. 1906.)

who had companied with the Lord Jesus from the day of His Baptism. It marked not simply a point in history, but a vital link between what we call the natural and what we call the supernatural, for it took them back to the point where they had been clearly made aware of the coöperation of the Holy Spirit with their Lord's humanity, and it assured them in preparation for the Pentecost that they in their measure, in the humanity which they shared with Him, were capable of receiving the same Spirit of power.

And even before the Pentecost they received a measure of that power. It was as if it already radiated from the Person of the Redeemer, and found some lodgement in their faithful hearts. "Freely ye have received, freely give" is the word with which they are sent on their first mission of the proclamation of the kingdom—a mission, be it remembered, which was to be specially marked by the healing of the sick.

We may dwell for a moment on this thought—that in the provision which the Lord will make for the help of men He accepts not the power, but the capacity of His faithful followers to be the vehicle of help to others. We must never forget that in the healing ministry this always holds good: it is not our power—that is God's alone—but our capacity for receiving the power which must be thought of. And so surely had the lesson been learnt that it seems to have passed almost into a proverb among the earliest disciples, so that when S. Paul charges the

Ephesian elders with their duty to help the sick, he appeals with no uncertainty to the popular version of the Lord's own words of His first commission to heal: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."¹

(2) But here, before we go on to consider the operation of that power which was to be given in fulness at the Pentecost, we feel ourselves confronted by a question which demands attention, because unless we can find some answer to it which will satisfy our minds, we shall not be able fully to enter into the meaning of the gift. The question is this. Does not this idea of spiritual gifts—something apart from and extraneous to our nature as we know it—conflict in some way with what we are being taught in other ways about the orderly progress of nature, the evolutionary process as we are accustomed to call it? We are aware that scientific thought is to-day impatient of anything that may be described as "irruptive"—that is, an event or a consequence which cannot be related to any previously established cause, or is out of sequence. And we cannot put that aside as irrelevant, for to do that would seem to deny the validity of those laws of Nature which it is the great glory of our time to be beginning to understand. It would be a weakness and not a strength to religion to seek to establish the one at the expense of the other. Nor would it satisfy us to say that they belong to two wholly distinct orders.

¹ Acts xx. 35; cf. S. Matt. x. 8.

There is to-day an intellectual craving for unity of life, which religion least of all should deny or disregard. We see on the one hand a closely knit system, the laws of which appear to be irresistible, and which we call the system or realm of Nature. Within that realm we have learnt to perceive a uniformity which impresses us as majestic. We see on the other hand a system in which *will* seems to be the dominating factor, and to us will, as we interpret it through personality, seems instinct with freedom rather than with uniformity. Our life is subject to both these conditions—but where are we to perceive the point where both meet and become a unity?

Perhaps it will help us if we recall again S. Augustine's dictum, that Nature as we know it is not Nature as God knows it. There is infinitely more in Nature than we are aware of. And because Nature and Personality are both creations of the same God, we may believe that there can be no ultimate contradiction in the laws by which they are governed. Or we may remember that for us Nature does not exist apart from personality, and that Nature is at bottom a purely spiritual thing. The material is the expression of the spiritual, it is the "materialization" of a thought, and that is the thought of God—the supreme Personality.

Or again, it may help us to consider how tenuous is the line between sensation—a physical process—and perception—a spiritual experience.

Although it may seem that such ideas are but bypaths of our subject, I venture to think that they will be of value if they lead you to see how in ultimate reality Nature itself, even in its most material aspects, is in fact a spiritual thing. It may help you to perceive the line along which our thought may move as we try to find that central unity for thought which is so essential to us to-day. Or again, if it seems difficult to you to reconcile any "irruptive" idea—which is so marked a feature of religious belief when it is looked at from the point of view of the pure Evolutionist—there is a line of thought which seems to be helpful. Briefly it is this :

You think and think rightly of that showing forth of God which we speak of as "His revelation" *par excellence*, as the revelation of an eternal fact. The truth embodied in that revelation is not something new. It is eternal. It belongs to the nature of God. It exists in Him before it is expressed in terms of time or human sense. But man's nature is in its present condition governed by what seems to be immutable law. And the law of mental or spiritual progress is known as the law of attention. He can only progress step by step, point by point, in accordance with that law. If, as sometimes has happened, e.g. in the visions of S. Paul or in the experience of some of the great mystics, there is vouchsafed a sudden glimpse of the great world of spiritual reality as it lies spread before the eyes of God, they cannot take it in, they cannot absorb its

meaning, still less can they express it in intelligible language. They have not perceived it according to the "law of attention"—their faculties are as yet inadequate for receiving the truth that is there. But the truth is no less true on that account. And the point for us to remember is that, following the natural "law of attention," man is able to perceive more and more of that great universe of spiritual reality in which he lives and moves and has his being, and is more and more able to correspond to it. If we think of it in this way, the old difficulty of a contradiction between the natural orderly movements which we call evolution, and that apparent outpouring of power which we call an irruption, will become less perplexing. We shall begin to see that God's universe does not change, but we change in our relation to it, and our perception of it. We shall begin to perceive widening circles round the centre, God; we shall begin to see new radii uniting those circles to their centre, radii along which we may pass as we learn more of the meaning of the presence of God in all His works.

And it will help us to understand some part of the meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven. We think of it often as the sphere of grace for our souls, to enable us to do God's will. We may add to that the thought, so constant in the New Testament, that it is the sphere where not only His Will is done, but where as part of that good will, His power is at work.

The bearing of this upon our religious concep-

tions may be at once perceived. While it broadens and deepens those conceptions, it will concentrate them. We shall seek to carry on our thought—our general philosophy of life—into the region of the spirit, and, in place of contradiction, we shall find fulfilment.

Faith and prayer become the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, not skeleton keys to pick the locks of forbidden magic chests, but part of that operation of power which belongs to and enshrines God's central purposes, and which can only be set in motion through personality.

It was perhaps part of the great *Kenosis*, the self-emptying of the Eternal Son, that He should employ these keys of faith and prayer for all the work He did for us men and for our salvation. But if that be so, how great the honour laid on us. That God should employ in His own Person faculties which belong so essentially to our human nature in order that He Himself might do His own work ! It links us on with Him in a way nothing else can do, and shows us how through faith and prayer the will of God may be done. And most especially in the healing ministry we need to remember this, that all our faith and all our prayer must have this end in view—that God's will may be done.

That God's will is good we know, and it waits often on our faith and prayer as the means by which it may operate upon the problems of the world. We think often of the blessing which comes in answer

to faithful prayer. May we not sometimes think also that the power cannot manifest itself except in these conditions? It seems to be the law of its operation, the point of contact by which, not the will of God only, but His power becomes operative in the lives of men.

But if the Lord Christ in His own Person shows us this road to the heart of God, there is still something more to be learnt. We shall, for instance, think no longer of His miracles as the measure of His Divinity, but in connection with His work as expressing God's will. It is, we know, the work of Redemption, the setting free of mankind from the ills which oppress them. So we may study His miracles of healing, and first we shall note how they express His attitude—God's attitude towards disease.

We note that already in ancient days there were gleams of the coming dawn. Isaiah speaks of the Servant of God who shall "bear our sorrows and carry our griefs," and the word he uses (*choli*) is always elsewhere rendered "sickness" or "disease," and so S. Matthew viii. 17 interprets it rightly: "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses"—it was part of His redemptive work. And this fact that He deals with disease as part of His great work of redemption is a determining factor, not only in learning something of the meaning of the Christ's mission, but in an understanding of the character and place of disease in the experience

of mankind. We shall return to this second point later. For the moment we note only our Lord's attitude to disease. It is never one of acquiescence, it is always one of hostility. But more than that, it is an attitude of authority, not simply in relation to the evil itself, but in regard to His method of dealing with it. He recognizes its source in dealing with the woman in the synagogue—(S. Luke xiii. 16) "whom Satan hath bound"—He recognizes a possible "contributing cause"—"sin no more, lest a worse thing happen unto thee" (S. John v. 14)—but beyond all this, He deals with it always with complete assurance of His prerogative. He "rebukes" the fever of Peter's wife's mother (S. Luke iv. 39) just as He "rebukes" the evil in the case of the lunatic boy (S. Matt. xvii. 18), or as He "rebukes" the storm (S. Matt. viii. 26), and the word He uses goes far beyond "blaming." It is the word of One who is exercising both judgment and authority.

It does not, perhaps, mean that the storm or the disease are personified, but it certainly suggests that both storm and disease are actions of a personality, and that personality is not God. And it is important to note that these acts of His are never called "portents"—as though they were mere exhibitions of personal power—*τέρας* is never used alone of them. They are always *σημεῖα* (signs) or *δυνάμεις* (wonders), as though to teach us that they belong to a world of spiritual force which is unseen by ordinary men, but which is ever present among them. There

is a realm of spiritual law which moves in its own order as infallibly as the order by which it seems to men the visible world is governed. And that men may enter into that spiritual realm and learn its laws and its methods is made clear when first the twelve and then the seventy are sent out on a mission of the kingdom, which specially includes the healing of the sick. And that this was no transient matter, dependent on the visible Presence of the Christ, these men and others were to learn when after the Pentecost they exercised the power which had been shed upon the whole Christian body. It is worth while noting here how largely what is called the "miraculous" element enters into the life of the Christian Church in her earliest days, and to note that at least, so far as in regard to the primary facts, we are in just the same position to-day.

In the Acts and in the Epistles, healing or other manifestations of Spiritual power seem to take their place in the ordinary life of the Christian as a matter of course :—e.g.

Acts iii. The impotent man at the Beautiful gate of the Temple.

Acts viii. 7. Philip the Deacon at Samaria, casting out evil spirits and healing the lame and the palsied.

Acts ix. 17. Ananias (probably a layman) healing Saul of his blindness.

Acts xiv. 10. S. Paul at Lystra, healing the lame man.

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Acts xvi. 18. S. Paul at Philippi casting out the Spirit of the Pythoness.

Acts xix. 12. S. Paul at Ephesus, handkerchiefs brought from his body. (Cf. "the Shadow of Peter"—but note that these two narratives have been thought to have been inserted in support of the "rival" claims of the two Apostles.)

Acts xx. 10. S. Paul at Troas. Restoration to life of Eutychus.

Acts xxviii. 5. S. Paul at Melita. Casting off the venomous beast.

The whole atmosphere is one of strange power, new in the experience of men. Nor was it confined to Apostolic activity, for in one of the earliest Pauline Epistles (Gal. iii. 5) "miracles" are spoken of as common occurrences in a Church which had no Apostolic head. Or again, the unknown writer to the Hebrews is aware of the prevalence of the "miraculous" in the lives of those to whom he is writing (Heb. ii. 4). And it was adduced as one of the great reasons why these converts, perplexed and troubled as they were by the conditions of their religious life, should remain steadfast and unshaken in their faith, for it so obviously opened to them a realm of power, dynamic force, which was entirely different from anything their old religion could provide.

We must be very careful in considering such

instances as these in the New Testament writings, to think of them as truly "signs"—manifestations of a real spiritual law, not as "prodigies" unrelated to other spiritual experience. If they are only prodigies, then they may be dismissed as mere embroideries on the narrative of life, but if they are signs, as we believe them to be, then we shall look for the law which underlies them, and so find something to unify the experience of those days with the experience on which we are slowly re-entering to-day. And the law which underlies them is the law of the Incarnate Life, always at work for the redemption of men, always conditioned for its operation by the faith of the Church. And the law of the Incarnate Life is the law of the Life of God in touch with the life of man.

III. THE OPERATION OF POWER

Acts iv. 7 : " By what power or in what name have *you* done this ? "

IN the last lecture our main thought was " the Kingdom of Power," and whatever other elements there are to be considered, its centre is in the Incarnate Life of our Divine Redeemer. More and more we are coming to see that that Life, besides being a personal revelation of God, is also a revelation of the relation subsisting between God and man. Through the Christ that relation is one not of thought only or of faith, but of actual vitality. The experience of the Church is the experience of the law of that vitality, and we may not think that in the two thousand years of her existence the Church has yet fathomed or measured the whole meaning of it. Nay, measured by even what we know now of the history of God's creative energy in the world of nature, the experience of the Church is but an infinitely little speck in the vast æons of time. And if the preparation for what we believe to be the crowning point of creation was so infinitely long and complex, may we not believe that we are only at the very beginning of an experience which will be greater than all the ages of preparation for it ?

We may go on to-day to consider some aspects of the operation of that "power" which is the characteristic of the Kingdom which the Lord Christ came to found. The root of power lies always in the union of God and man, and the fact of this was made manifest by the gift of the Holy Ghost. The gift of the Holy Ghost was, as our Lord defined it (Acts i. 8), coincident with the gift of power. We have already noted that in filling up the gap in the Apostolic circle, special care was taken to choose one who had companied with them all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, "beginning from the baptism of John," and we saw that the significance of this lay not in the mere historic point, but in the linking together of their human nature with His in its common capacity for receiving this gift of power. And we may notice also as of real significance in the Church's thought about this gift, that the early forms of the Nicene Creed—her universal symbol—ended just on this note: "I (we) believe in the Holy Ghost." Within that gift and in that faith lay the whole revelation through experience which the Church should learn in all the ages of her history.

To dwell on this for a moment will remind us of a very important matter. Any part of our religious experience is a part of our religion as a whole, and is part of the action of the Holy Ghost within our personal orbit. We could not think of separating the details of such experience and assigning some only

to the action of the Holy Spirit. To do so would be tacitly at least to deny His action in regard to other details. To do that would be to make our religion "a thing of shreds and patches," which would be intolerably untrue. And we who are trying to learn the meaning of Christ's healing power in the Church must be careful not to separate the experience of that power from other manifestations of the Spirit. There is an added difficulty, which might soon become a danger, in that we are obliged to speak of the "gifts" of healing, and almost insensibly the implications grow that somehow they stand by themselves in a category apart. To leave them so would be to destroy the proportion of faith, and so to lose the meaning of the healing gifts themselves. It is a difficult task, perhaps, to insist for ourselves and for others that the healing gifts must not be separated off from the main current of religious experience within the Church, but must be regarded as a part of that experience—a part, that is, of that manifestation of the spiritual law which governs and controls her whole life. It is difficult, especially under the pressure of present day demands, but it is essentially necessary.

(1) I have chosen the words which stand at the head of this lecture because they record the first experience of the exercise of this power by the Apostles, after their Lord's visible Presence had been withdrawn and after His promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit had been fulfilled, and they record,

too, the effect which the exercise of that power had upon the minds of those who beheld it. If it was a "test case" for the Apostles, it was no less so for the beholders. And we notice at once that there is no doubt at all as to the reality of the cure of the impotent man. There was no doubt, but there was immense perplexity, and you must remember that the critics were hostile witnesses. They would if they could have disavowed the healing, but the fact was too strong for them. And it was the more puzzling because these men through whom the miracle was wrought seemed to be just "common" men with no claims to special ability. And because they were only "common" men (there is a flavour of contempt in the emphatic "you"—"by what authority have *you* done this), the thought, so natural to the Jewish mind, at once suggests itself, they must be acting under the authority of some name, some person, greater than themselves. But for the Jew, there was a religious meaning in the form of the question. The Name stood for the Jews for a revelation of God, and the use of the term hints at something of religious awe. For they knew that time and again some fresh revelation of God had come to their people through some new Name by which He had been called, each growing in solemnity and wonder till at the last the greatest Name by which they knew Him, Jehovah, might never be pronounced by mortal lips.

And we must remember that the Apostles shared

that knowledge. They too were Jews, and all the inherited awe of their race for these "Name" revelations of God would be theirs, too. But they had found a key to the meaning of them. Little by little the Names had seemed to sunder God and man, but these men had learnt that, in the Name of Jesus Christ, He had drawn near to them, so near, indeed, that their humanity in which He shared could for ever be the instrument through which His power might be manifestly known. This is a point not to be forgotten as we try to learn the meaning of those signs of power which henceforth marked the progress of the Church. Human faculties are used, but they are used as channels of something infinitely greater than themselves. Human persons are employed for work which lies infinitely beyond human capacity, yet which in the providence of God needs these media for its fulfilment. It is this deep conviction that inspires those earliest teachers of the faith. "There is no other Name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." It is the last great Name by which He wills to be known among men, the Name which speaks always of redemption from evil and of power to live. It is the Name into which all Christians are baptized as into the final and highest fellowship with God.

(2) We shall go on later to ask about the permanence of the spiritual gifts, but this seems an appropriate point at which to recall some of the theories which, in time past, have been advanced to explain

or explain away the possibility of miracle. Dr. Tennant in his recent lectures on "Miracle and its Philosophical Presuppositions,"¹ states them and criticizes the two main theories (in both of which the real difficulty is the definition of miracle). One theory, that of the deists of the eighteenth century, was based on rationalistic premises of a reign of law, an all-pervading unconditional, immutable necessity into which being has to fit, or be fitted by God, in order to be.² The fallacy here is that laws do not presuppose facts, but facts laws. It is quite useless to create an intellectual scheme and then try to force facts into it, making the scheme the test of the truth of the facts. The second theory, which Dr. Tennant calls "pseudo-scientific,"³ relies supremely on the results of inductive science by which a claim was made to exclude miracle because it was contrary to that uniformity of nature which was believed to be immutable. But since science can only infer or formulate laws from observed facts, it cannot strictly project those laws into the future, it can only argue up to the present moment and along the lines of particular investigation which it is then pursuing. Because a fact cannot be brought within a law which has been formulated from observing other facts, that fact may not therefore be rejected—its own law of its own being must be investigated. And we ought to be very careful, as Dr. Tennant's

¹ Cambridge University Press, 1925.

² P. 13.

³ P. 14.

criticisms remind us, if we are inclined to find refuge in the term "higher law" which was frequently used in theological-scientific discussions on miracles in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and which is not infrequently spoken of to-day as the right line along which to look for the explanation of miracles. We shall have to be very careful as to what we mean by "higher law," lest we someday find that that higher law may really fall wholly within the sphere of the intellect and wholly depart from the sphere of the spirit. To take an illustration. Until, say, twenty years ago, the idea of the electric telegraph was sufficiently wonderful to rouse the admiration of those who thought about it as an application of natural law to the needs of expanding civilization—but wireless telegraphy was beyond our wildest dreams. To reach the same results without the connecting wires would have been thought to be the wildest flight of a perfervid imagination. It would have been "miraculous" in the sense that there was no perceptible cause to account for such a result. But to-day "wireless" is the commonplace of every cottage. And this has come about because men have found a "higher law" than the law of the electric telegraph to be at work. But it is not "unnatural" any more than the law of the electric telegraph; it is not "miraculous," it is simply part of the natural law which has been awaiting discovery and use. But it has to be investigated in accordance with the "law" of wireless telegraphy,

not in accordance with the law which governs the ordinary electric telegraph.

But when we speak of "higher law" being at work in such matters as Spiritual Healing, we are thinking of something different from those laws of nature which are amenable to scientific investigation. But they are not on that account to be thought "unnatural" to man's whole being. But it must be his *whole* being—spirit as well as soul and body. And science at present has no category in which to place man's spirit.

It will help us when we think of such things to couple with our thought of the higher law, the cognate thought, which is so frequent in the New Testament, of "the mystery"—that is, something that was once obscure, but is now in process of being made known. "Some new thing to know"—that is the lot of man, whether of the Church or of the world, says Dr. Figgis.¹ Even that portion of it which once was "darkness," but is "now light in the Lord," is still subject to this law. Its apprehension is never adequate to the reality, least of all in religion.

The things of the Spirit of God are spiritually judged indeed, but that is not to say that either the things themselves, or the power of perceiving them, and in our measure understanding them, are not subject to their own law which the Church is slowly learning to apprehend. And we remember, too, that one of the names of the New Testament for the

¹ Figgis, "The Fellowship of the Mystery," pp. 4 ff.

Church is "the fellowship of the mystery." It is within that fellowship with God, as well as with our brethren, that we are learning the laws of that mystery. It is in this sense, then, that we may mean a "higher law" as affecting and governing man in a higher relation than his relation to the world he lives in. It affects and governs him in his personal spiritual relation to God.

(3) But greatest and most central of all, the "higher law" must to a Christian thinker mean the law of the Incarnate Life, which was fore-ordained from before the beginning of the world. S. Peter is indeed in that phrase writing of the Atonement, but that implies the Incarnation. It is, as he teaches us, antecedent to the world's history; antecedent, *therefore*, to the way of science by which God is making known the laws of His wondrous universe. Nay, if we follow S. Paul's teaching (Rom. viii. 18 ff), the law of that universe will some day be subsumed in the greater law of that final unifying principle which unites the infinite and the material, the Divine and the "natural." But that, as Christians believe, is the final revelation, only to be apprehended of the whole Body using its spiritual faculties of apprehension, as well as its intellectual faculties of comprehension, and finding at long last that they are both converging roads to one centre—God.

And here, at the outset of the Church's work as an "extension of the Incarnation," which is her true

vocation, we find an immediate focus for her activity in faith and practice. It is the focus of revelation—His Name—and through all the ages of her history her thought and words and works have only been true and valid in so far as they have been the following out of that law of life which is enshrined in His Name—His supreme revelation of God's relation to man. And the point of utter and absolute truth for us is that that law of life is a law of personality. It must always be along the line of personality, never along the line of anything more external than this, that we must humbly pursue our enquiry, learn our lessons, do our work. It is more than individuality—that seems to impose limitations—separations. The fulfilment is to be sought in that corporate life and corporate revelation which is an essential quality of the fellowship of the mystery. And from the earliest days till now it is "in His Name, and through faith in His Name," that the work is done and the "Miracles" wrought. For we are always to remember that the "fellowship" does not create the "mystery"—it shares in and learns to understand the mystery by its own initiation into it through sacramental union with the Divine and the human in Christ.

If you will keep this thought in mind, the thought of the Church as Christ's Body sharing in the eternal mystery, you will begin to see at least one reason for believing that the gift of healing—the action of the Holy Spirit upon our condition of need—should be

regarded without presumption as part of the permanent equipment of the Church for her work. It was a part of the manifestation of the mystery in the first days of history. The mystery did not then depend in itself, or in its manifestations, upon intellectual, but upon spiritual conditions, and it would be a large assumption that those conditions have ceased to be operative.

(4) We may at this point remind ourselves of some of the ways in which the Epistles teach us about the meaning of the fellowship, and the reality of its manifestations in the life of the Church through the "gifts" with which she is endowed. To take them in the order in which they were written :

(a) In the Epistles to the Thessalonians (which, as Dr. Swete reminds us,¹ show us an experience of primitive Christianity) we find two gifts of the Spirit specially manifest—prophecy and discernment of spirit. Two matters of particular interest are to be noted. Prophecy was "to these Gentile converts an entirely new gift."² The power of the Holy Spirit was obvious, and was producing results unknown before in their "natural" experience. But along with that gift went another—the discerning of spirits—which gave clear certainty in adjudging true prophetic utterances. Join with this earliest writing of S. Paul that which occurs in one of his latest letters—the Epistle to the Ephesians—"the

¹ "The Holy Spirit in the New Testament," p. 176.

² Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

spirit of wisdom and revelation " (Eph. i. 17), and you will see a " gift " operating in widely different conditions and at some interval of years. Is that another step towards realizing the permanence of these operations of the Spirit ?

(b) The Epistles to the Galatians and to the Romans are more formal treatises. Their tone is, as you know, strongly anti-Judaic, and the proof adduced in both Epistles in support of the Christians is the obvious manifestation of powers—gifts—which are lacking in the Jewish religion. In Galatians the fundamental position is elaborated—it is " because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts." It is fundamental to the possession of spiritual gifts, because it is fundamental to the whole Christian position. But (and this is important to the argument of the Epistle) the evidence of sonship is to be found not simply in the purified life of believers, but in the working of miracles among them (Gal. iii. 5). And they were just " ordinary Christians," for there appear to have been no leaders among them of Apostolic or outstanding eminence. We may refer in this connection to the Lambeth Report, p. 13, " within the Church . . . systems of healing based on the redemptive work of our Lord . . . all spring from a belief in the fundamental principle that the power to exercise spiritual healing is taught by Christ to be the natural heritage of Christian people who are living in fellowship with God, and is part of the ministry of Christ

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through His body the Church." The Epistle to the Galatians certainly seems to support that position.

(c) The Epistle to the Romans deals with a different situation. The Church in Rome was at the centre of civilization, and was regarded by the secular power as a sect of the Jews. That is a misconception which must be cleared up, and again the appeal is to the evidence of power, not only in the moral and spiritual characteristics of the Church, but, too, in her charismatic endowments. For the first time the figure of the Church as the Body of Christ comes into view. It is worked out more fully in 1 Corinthians, but while in the later Epistle the Apostle deals with the office and work of the members of that Body, in Romans he develops for the first time the theme that the Body is the *instrument* through which God works and can work because it is sharing a common life in Christ. That is the true basis of corporate spiritual being and corporate spiritual energy, and it has the greatest possible significance to-day, as then, in the faithful use of the spiritual gifts.

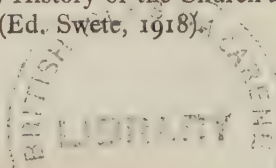
We must leave over consideration of the teaching of 1 Corinthians to the next lecture, when we come to consider some of the specific spiritual gifts. But there is one point which we cannot pass by. It concerns the "gift" of faith, and the Apostle in the passage to which I direct your attention speaks of it in connection with another gift—that of prophecy—"Having gifts differing according to the grace

that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith" (Rom. xii. 6, 7, R.V.).

Before we go on to consider these two things, prophecy and faith, as they are linked together here, let me say in parenthesis a word about the relation of prophecy to those other gifts of utterance with which it is associated in the New Testament—the gift of tongues and the gift of interpretation. Prophecy was regarded as the most important of all the strictly "charismatic" gifts. The possessors of the gift ranked next to the Apostles, and though they were not ordained,¹ yet we see them a little later on performing as of right what is otherwise regarded as the highest of all priestly functions—the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice. The unity of the Church was safeguarded by the prophets being subject to the Bishop, but this departure from general and accepted custom was eloquent of their position of honour in the Church.

Their gift seems to have been mainly apocalyptic—i.e. a revelation of the counsel of God, not predictive. Their messages were capable of being understood by themselves and by their hearers, and in this respect they were more fully equipped than were the "seers" who saw visions, but could not bring them to the use of the Church without an interpreter. In Old Testament times we have

¹ Cf. "The Early History of the Church and the Ministry," pp. 30, 64, 66, etc. (Ed. Swete, 1918).



instances of false prophets, and there is no apparent criterion by which their utterances may be judged. But in the New Testament the criterion is supplied by the corporate consciousness of the Church.

Associated with the prophet's gift are the gifts of teaching, word of knowledge, word of wisdom, exhortation. Associated with the seer's gift are the gift of tongues and the interpretation of tongues.

The gift of tongues is one of the most debated matters in New Testament exposition. It was apparently evidential in the Acts (after the Pentecost), but we must remember that all the people mentioned there—Parthians, Medes, etc., were Jewish proselytes, and had presumably a common knowledge of the Greek and Aramaic tongues. But the gift of tongues as we find it a little later on (*sc.*, among the Corinthians) was not for evidential purposes, but for edifying the Church itself. Perhaps in that use it was not the question of dialect (of “form”), but of “matter” which was important. “Each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation” . . . may all be forms of the gift of tongues. In this sense the Book of the Revelation may also, I think, be a form of the same gift. It is worth remembering the contrast at Corinth with the neighbouring shrine of Apollo at Delphi—where various means of exciting the “gift” of tongues were in use. At Corinth, on the contrary, the Apostle's instruction was towards repression, not excitement. A parallel difference may be found also

between the excitement of the "health cult" at Delphi and the sober restraint of the Apostolic teaching in the Corinthian Epistle.

The importance of this passage (Rom. xii. 6) to the present discussion is that if we take the point of some interpreters, both ancient and modern—"let him prophesy according to the proportion of faith"—we come in sight of a very important principle with which we are intimately concerned in the practice of the healing ministry, viz. the place and action of corporate faith in relation to a particular gift manifested in a particular individual.

The gift of prophecy depending upon the gift of faith; the prophet's gift set free by the faith of the Church—that is how many ancient commentators understood those words. And not set free only, but tested. We shall have something further to learn about the gift of faith, but here is a broad background—the whole body instinct with a living force, the living faith in the Lord Christ, and therefore in herself as His Body, the instrument of His will. Through her faith the prophet's power to deliver His message is set free, and through her faith she can perceive for herself and for her members what is the meaning and import of that message. It reminds us that there are gifts entrusted to the Body for the service of men in God's good will, which, inherent in her calling, may yet be waiting for her faith in order that they may be set free for action. We deeply need at the present time, and in the exig-

ences of our work, to consider and to try to measure the meaning of this aspect of the Church's corporate life. The prophet's message did not depend solely on the *prophet's* faith, or on the faith of those to whom he spoke. It depended more really on the faith of the Church of which he was a ministering member. Does not the exercise of her gifts, entrusted to the whole Body, but mediated through particular members, still depend for full action on the faith of that Body as a whole?

It is an inspiring thought for the humblest among us, this thought of what we may call the constructive quality in faith. It seems to be the distinguishing work of the "gift" or charisma of faith. I have tried elsewhere¹ to trace out the way in which this differentiation is shown in the New Testament. In the Gospels we can see different qualities in the faith of those who approach the Lord; we can see, too, that He seems to be searching for one particular quality which He may train and use for the building up of His Kingdom. It is a constructive quality, which should fit its possessors to receive the crowning charisma of faith, by which they may themselves become instruments in the hand of God for work which far outpasses their personal limitations. It is an aspect of vicarious faith—vicarious not in the sense of acting on behalf of someone else, but in the sense of affecting the operation of power in others

¹ "S. Raphael Quarterly," Oct., 1925.

who only share with us a common inheritance in the One Body.

This corporate faith is of supreme importance, not less to-day than in other ages of the Church's history. We can note its flood and ebb tides, and we can trace what seems to account for it. In the first ages corporate faith was strong and, in consequence, the Church's witness was full of power. That seems to me to coincide with the days when her dominating note of consciousness was that of the Body of Christ expressing His life. But from the fourth century that form of witness declined, for her faith had become centred on a new ideal—the ideal of authority. Then in the Middle Ages it revived, only under another form. No longer as power manifest through living men: it was power manifest through relics and holy places. That, curiously enough, had its origin in the fourth century also, and seems to point to this, that the Church was so conscious of the need to remember and to realize this fact of power present among men, that even in the moment when her ideal for her living members was beginning to change, she attached the thought of that living power to places and things rather than to persons.

And then came what is so proudly called "the age of reason," and again it died away—not perhaps solely by the Church's declension from any spiritual ideal at all—but by the force of reason brought to bear upon the ideals to which she seemed to attach importance.

It was a hard lesson, but a lesson that had to be

learnt. Reason is one of God's greatest gifts, and reason needs the sanctification of His Spirit before it can be used in His full service.

And to-day, with the revival of healing activity within the Church and outside of it, we must not forget the lesson. Faith, in the New Testament, is never opposed to reason, it is always contrasted with sight—i.e. with perception through the senses. And we as Christians must believe that the inner power of the Spirit penetrates to regions beyond human reason, and then returns to sanctify that reason with new experiences and new gifts.

The age of materialism is passing. Natural science and psychology alike unite to teach us that. The one is finding the ultimate measure of matter, not in the dead atom, but in the electron of living force, the other is proclaiming the power of mind (i.e. pure spiritual force) to direct and control and use matter to its own ends. Dare we not say that this movement of trained thought is bringing it infinitely nearer to the sacramental beliefs of the Church, where matter and men become the vehicles and channels of Divine power, than it has ever been before? Is not that a call upon the faith of the Church to realize herself and her gifts afresh as God's method of His own self manifestation, in order that reason and knowledge—those other gifts of His—may be touched with the Divine fire and welded into the harmony of His complete purpose?

IV. THE CHARISMATA IN CHURCH HISTORY (A)

1 Cor. xii. 12 : " For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ."

1 Cor. xii. 28 : " God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues."

I HAVE placed these two quotations at the head of this lecture because they emphasize some very important matters which must be borne in mind as we go on to learn something about the several charismata—the particular gifts—which are our special subject to-day.

The first quotation obviously teaches us some things of primary importance about the Church herself. The first thing is her unity. But it is not a level and undifferentiated unity. There is a necessary diversity within that unity, or the Body could not properly perform its functions. And the diversity consists in the special duty or office of each member. Each member has his proper function and must perform it as part of the whole efficiency of the whole Body. And the second thing to note is that the unity of the Body does not arise

from organization. It arises from something much more central. The Church here is thought of not as an organization, but as an organism, a living thing with its own proper expression of its own proper life. The activities of the Church as of its analogue the human body, are not simply dominated by the purpose or aim of its inner self, but are the very manifestations or expressions of that inner self, the evidences that it is a living and not a dead body. Again, and most impressive—almost startling in its abrupt clearness—is the conclusion of the argument, “So also is Christ.” Comparisons and analogies pass—they are altogether inadequate measures. They lead up to and issue in this one thing—complete identity in this respect of the Church and her Lord. It is almost too wonderful to realize, yet it is only in this that she may make her great adventure of life and work. It is not only life and work lived and done in obedience to Him—it is His life which is being lived and His work which is being done by Him through her.

Is it imperfect vision as well as faltering faith which accounts perhaps for some of the failures of which we are sometimes so sadly and so profoundly conscious? We can never accept the view that the Church as a whole fails—that is unthinkable—but sometimes parts of her work seem ineffective. May that not sometimes be due to want of that corporate vision, of that corporate faith, not only in her leaders and workers, but in the rank and file of her

members, which is an essential condition for the fulfilment of her mission? The problems are apt to loom large because they are close to our eyes, they focus our thought. But we must not forget that inner vision which will bring courage and knowledge in dealing with them. It is true to-day as in the early days that "the vision of God is the life of man," and this is most especially true in that aspect of her ministry which we are considering.

But when we say the Creed and declare our belief in the Holy Catholic Church, in precisely the same terms as we express our belief in the three Persons of the ever glorious Trinity, we may remember that it is not presumption but humble faith which dares to do this, nay, can do no less than this as we recall the wonder-stirring phrase, "So also is the Christ."

It is Christ in present action. There are other aspects of the Church with which we are familiar. It is, e.g. the Kingdom where we learn His will in the laws of the spiritual life. It is the "ecclesia" where, if it be true to say that it is an assembly "called out" from the world, it is no less true to say that as of old the loyal Greek citizens were summoned from their homes by the herald's call to join the public assemblies, so in Christ's ecclesia individual souls are "called out" of the littleness of their individual life to take their part and share in the great Christian commonwealth. It is the leaven or the mustard seed of the Gospel parables, a principle of life which permeates the medium in

which it finds a home, or a principle of life which finds its own expression in growth and organization.

We are familiar with these figures of the Church, but surely nothing is more wonderful than this inspired conception of the Apostle—the living Church, living because the living Christ wills in His infinite condescension to work in and through her as His very Body. And we mark that all through this passage the whole meaning lies in this—that she exists not only to bring man to God—but even more wonderful still, to bring God in Christ to men. That then is the true setting of the spiritual gifts. It is obvious that this cannot be, except in an atmosphere of living faith, and the Apostle has already set the norm of faith for each individual Christian—“No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit ” (v. 3).

It is the one condition in which we may begin to learn the meaning and place of the charismatic gifts. It implies obedience to His will as well as inspiration of His love, and so guards against the danger of false ideals as well as false ideas. When once this is assured, alike for “ordinary” Christians and for those specially gifted with some particular charisma, we are in the atmosphere in which the meaning of the gifts may be considered and explained.

The Apostle's explanation is one which concerns the whole Body, albeit the special gifts may be manifested only in certain members of that Body.

And this is of special importance to our subject, because it gives us a principle which was recognized as operative during the whole period in which the complete charismatic equipment of the Church was active. That carries us beyond New Testament times. There is evidence of that activity long after the Apostolic age, and while this is sufficient ground for believing that these gifts were not specially attached to the Apostolic age, it also supplies cogent reasons for asking why they ceased to be actively a part of the Church's experience. We cannot accept the idea that they were withdrawn, for the New Testament portrays the operation of Divine and, therefore, eternal forces in the lives of men. We should have to look for some other reason to account for their disuse, and this would probably be found in some change of condition or even eclipse of principle. But that is too wide a subject for our present purpose.

There is, however, a principle which S. Paul's rule of faith, "No man can say Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit," supplies, which may rightly be applied to the consideration of the gifts whether in New Testament writings or in later times. The sacred Name of Jesus is the name of God the Redeemer. And the meaning of the gifts is to be understood as interpreted in that Name. They are activities of the Spirit of the Redeemer, and must be interpreted as such. Having this in mind, the first point to be noticed in the formal list of 1 Corinthians

xii. 28 ff., apart from the gift of tongues, about which we shall have something to say later, is the division of the gifts into two main sections. The first section has to do with offices within the Church—Apostles, Prophets, Teachers—the second, with energies or operations at work within the Church. And you will notice that both classes have the same origin in the will of God. “ God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondly, Prophets, thirdly Teachers, then miracles,” etc.

You will begin to see some further reason for our belief that these gifts are intended to be permanent endowments for the Church's life, when you remember that the offices enshrined in the first three terms are in essentials the foundation of her ministerial organization to-day. They have not passed away. Is there any reason, therefore, to suppose that the gifts coupled with them have passed away?

But it is of equal or even greater importance to our purpose to note how this charismatic endowment of the Church provides for the well-being of the whole man. Apostles, Prophets, Teachers—those whose calling it is to bring God's gifts to man for the welfare of his spiritual life; miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments—gifts by which his bodily welfare for the duties of the Christian life is assured, for that seems to be the object of the charismata. Men need the Sacraments as the great “ means of grace ”; they must know the Truth

as it is in Jesus if they would be truly free, and this is part of that deposit which we believe to have come down through the ages of Apostolic descent, in the sacred ministry of the Church. The Apostles and their successors the Bishops have held from the first ages this supreme place in the Ministry of the Church. And one of the most important matters, which I hope to discuss a little later, is that through the Bishops the Priests of the Church to-day receive in delegated ministry, parallel to so much else in the office and work of a Priest, the ministry of healing.

Alongside this sacramental ministry there is another—the ministry of the Prophets. We are not here concerned with the content of their ministry. That is a matter for historical investigation. But there are some matters which are of very great interest to us when we are learning about the use of those gifts within the Church, which are broadly called “charismatic” to distinguish them from “sacramental” gifts. We must be careful in using these terms not to be tempted to draw too hard and fast a line. All the gifts with which the Church is endowed are charismatic in the sense that they are gifts of God in the Holy Spirit. But some of them are manifested in ways which we have learned to call sacramental, that is, with some visible sign attached to them, while others could only be brought within this category by forced and artificial classification. And if we bear this caution in

mind, the distinction for practical purposes will serve.

The special interest of the order of Prophets is that they were "charismatic" and not sacramental persons. That is to say, they were not ordained by any laying on of hands, but were recognized by the Church as ministers within the Body by the exercise of their peculiar gift of prophecy. Their gift was personal to themselves and did not come to them by ordination. Of necessity there were tests to be applied by the Church in order that she might be assured of the validity of the gift before approving these ministers. But, having been approved, their privileges were wide as to men who had been singled out by the direct action of the Holy Spirit. What is however of importance to us to remember is that this "charismatic" ministry, with all the prestige which was likely to accrue to persons who were so signally marked out by the Holy Spirit for special service in the Church, only served the Church under the sanction and, at least to some extent, under the control of the Bishop. The importance of this lies in the fact that even so great and so personal a gift was recognized as being a contribution to the whole purpose and service of the Church, and was used in this way for the edifying, that is the building up, of the whole body. It was not till a much later period in history that the claim to these special powers led to division and schism. And it is interesting and important to find "charismatic"

persons working under the sanction of the Bishop, to whom they owed nothing as regards their gift and their consequent position in the Church, but to whom they owed and rendered obedience as the chief ruler in the Church.

Thirdly, Teachers. We know the expression, "a born teacher," and we know that those who do not come under such a description cannot properly perform the office of teachers. Here it seems likely that some members of the Church were specially qualified (perhaps intellectually) by their gift to expound the word.

We note that in the Ephesian list (Eph. iv. 11) Evangelists and Pastors are added to teachers. It is probable that the evangelists were exponents of the life of Christ, and it is not unlikely that S. Luke may be referring to them in his prologue to his Gospel, "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us."

"*Then miracles.*" When we consider the Gospel miracles we are aware that the old point of view, that they were evidences of our Lord's Divinity, no longer obtains. From whatever other angle they may be studied it is never now from that point of view. It has had its day and has passed away. It has been discarded, but has any solution more satisfying to the thought of to-day taken its place? The miracles have been examined from the psychological point of view, from the

philosophical point of view, from the standpoint of natural science, with its infinitely widened outlook of the last half-century. But they remain insoluble problems when approached along any of these avenues. Explanations have been advanced, attitudes have been changed as, e.g. from the old position stated by Hume "miracles cannot happen," to the new position, "miracles do not happen." They still, however, remain anomalies whether from the psychological, the philosophical or the scientific points of view. That at least suggests that these three tests, so splendidly valid within their own spheres, are yet inadequate to cover the whole of observed phenomena. There is always the residuum which cannot be explained, and thinkers within these three spheres of intellectual activity are the first to admit it. Is it too high a suggestion that the explanation of miracles as a manifestation of spiritual power following its own laws within its own sphere, not contradictory but complementary to the laws of being in other spheres of activity, may at least be worthy of consideration?

I venture to suggest that much fruitful result might be gained from a study of the Lord's miracles, in which they should be related not to His Person but to His work. There seem to me to be two lines along which that study might move: (a) That as our Lord's whole work was dependent on the purpose of His life, and that purpose was the redemption of mankind, so the miracles should be studied as

being part of that redemptive work. In this way they should be thought of as showing how He, in His redemptive power, regarded and dealt with the ills as well as the sins which afflict mankind. (b) Or we may study the miracles in order to see whether they do not point us to some law of power, of which the world is ignorant, at work under certain conditions to which He pointed the way and of which we believe He is Himself the Great Exponent.

This word "miracles" (*δυνάμεις*) in the passage we are discussing seems to have a place special to itself in its rank among the charismatic gifts. It is used, indeed, in the New Testament as a kind of generic term to describe the mighty works wrought by our Lord or by His Apostles as, e.g. Mark vi. 2, "Such mighty works were wrought by His hands." But when we come to examine the word still more closely, we find (particularly in S. Luke—a *physician*) that the word is employed with marked frequency in connection with the healing of mental or spiritual disorders (possession and the like), as distinguished from healing of the body. The reference seems to me still more pointed when we remember that the word, in its sense of power, is applied to the activities of the Evil One.

It is as though to remind us that this evil power, which has shown itself specifically within the spiritual region of man's being, is subjected at last to the greater power of One who has real authority—the Christ of God.

We may note that our Lord always used the word—which is then translated “power” or “powers”—in connection with the spiritual and not the physical world.

And while we must keep in mind the generic character of the word, it seems permissible to think that we may here also follow the thought which seems to be apparent in the Gospels, and attach (though, of course, not exclusively) the same colour to it, namely, that these “miracles” as an endowment of the Church have to do specially with the healing of disorders which make themselves evident in men’s minds or spirits.

We shall come a little later on to see how this part of her work was so definitely recognized by the Church, that one of the first of what were afterwards called “minor orders” instituted by her was, apparently, the order of exorcists. It was, I believe, one of the consequences of this order being instituted that the general exercise of healing power in the Church began to decline. But that we may discuss later.

“*Then gifts of healings*” (χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων). The plurals are important to note, for they suggest distinctions. (a) These distinctions may lie in the method employed. The Lord Himself, the Supreme Source of healing, employed different methods—word, or touch, or some outward means. And His method in healing some particular organ of the senses or in restoring a particular function of the body

is very significant. In all the recorded cases He *invariably* uses some outward means. He either touches the affected organ with His hands or fingers, or He anoints the part with saliva or with clay. That may suggest to us different methods of bringing the healing power to the sick when they are suffering from illness which affects the body or limbs as a whole, or when they are suffering from illness which affects some particular organ of sense.

(b) Secondly, "gifts of healings" may suggest classes of healings as, on the one hand, healing of mind or spirit, and on the other, physical healings. It seems to me that as we grow in experience—perhaps, in order that we may be able to grow in experience—it will be our duty to test this matter, to see whether there may not be—what for the sake of distinction I must call "laws of spirit" and "laws of body" which may vitally affect the ministry of healing. As in other matters, we shall only learn slowly, step by step, and for this reason if for no other it would be well for those who minister the healing gifts to keep a properly tabulated record of their work and methods. I do not, of course, suggest a hard and fast line between, e.g. Unction and laying on of hands, but I do feel that some attention should be paid to the possibility of different classes of illnesses being treated differently. No doubt that is already being done in a tentative way, but as time goes on we may, perhaps, be able to define the treatment of different illnesses more clearly.

(c) Thirdly, "gifts of healings" suggests difference of gift to different people. Some may have a gift for healing one class or kind of illness, others may have gifts for healing other classes or kinds of illness. We already know that some people are specially able to help those who are mentally or morally sick. Some can help what are called "nervous" cases. May there not be others whose gift is specially given for the help of physical disorders? It is a point which may well receive attention.

One matter ought not to be overlooked at this point. The whole tone of this Epistle is that it is written to and for the lay people of the Church, and it seems clear that while S. Paul so strongly insists on the spiritual gifts being an endowment of the whole Church, and couples together those "gifts" which specifically belong to leadership in the Body—Apostles, Prophets, Teachers—I do not think we are intended to suppose that what are specially called the "charismatic" gifts are only to be exercised by the leaders, i.e. the Clergy. The clergy exercise those gifts because they are the ministers of the whole Body. The gifts are in the "treasury of the Church," and the clergy would not need a personal charisma in order to minister them. They would minister these gifts as they minister other sacramental gifts in the Church, by right of their Priesthood. We shall recur to this a little later: it is necessary to mention it here for the sake of clearness.

When we say that the charismatic gifts mentioned in this Epistle are gifts to the whole Body, and therefore to the laity as well as to the clergy, this does not imply that each member of the Body possesses all the gifts, and it must, of course, be understood that while they are gifts to individuals, they are not to be regarded as private gifts—that is, gifts to be used or not used at the caprice or desire of the individual. They are his as a member of the Body—the Epistle is quite clear—almost formal—on this point. That will mean necessarily that they must be used under the direction of the Body, the Church, and with a view to the whole purpose of the Church's work. It is in this sense that, while the gift is manifest in an individual, it is actually a corporate gift—part of the whole equipment of the Church. It is this which gives the Church the right to regulate the use of the gift, and it gives the individual the honour as well as the duty of so signally adding to the expression of that vitality which is the deepest and most sacred possession of the Church. Very many questions as to the use of this power must inevitably arise, and will only be solved in the humble faith of the whole Body of the Church intent on learning to fulfil the will of her Lord. But before we leave this part of our subject there is one thing we ought to call to mind.

It is the possibility of progressive attainment in healing power. Not as adding to an accomplishment, but as a growing correspondence of fitness

for the power of the Christ to be made manifest in us. We remember the Lord's words to His disciples when they failed to heal the lunatic boy—"because of your little faith." The word is in strong contrast to what the Master has just said of the crowd round the boy. They were altogether faithless; the disciples' faith was real, but it was not yet great enough for this difficult work. But the Master goes on to teach them to expect that it should grow, and that through it the work of power He expects to be done should be done.

We may sometimes humbly think of this, how the growth of faith may mean not the power to receive only, but the power to give to those who have a claim for help.

"*Helps, governments.*" The two remaining gifts with which we are concerned may be linked together. We shall not discuss the gift of tongues, partly because it does not come within our scope just now, partly because it seems so little to belong to the redemptive aspect of the Church's work (as all those gifts we have been considering do), that it rapidly passes out of sight as part of her equipment.¹

But if we link these two gifts together, let us give them the interpretation to which they are entitled. As they stand in both Authorised Version and Revised Version they seem to refer back to the first gifts in the whole group, Apostles-prophets-

¹ It survives to-day among the Irvingites.

teachers, and so to confuse the sequence of thought—to connect them with gifts belonging to the organization and oversight of the Church.

But if they be translated—as they quite rightly may be ¹—“nursings,” ² “wise guidings,” they complete and amplify the gifts of healings, and suggest not only different powers of help entrusted to different persons, but also thoughtful and informed counsels as to the kind of healing to be employed in any particular case.

“God hath set in the Church.” We cannot pass from considering the meaning of these gifts without recalling that sentence which applies to them all, to the gifts of miracles, healings, tendings, wise guidings, in mental or bodily sickness as much as to the gifts which are enshrined in offices which seem to belong more specially to the organization of the Church. And that sentence supplies at least part of the answer to the question we sometimes hear to-day. “Granted that these gifts were part of the equipment of the Church in those earliest days, what warrant have we for supposing that they are to be regarded as permanent in the life of the Church?” Were they not simply “evidential,” i.e. did they not simply witness to the supernatural life in the Church, and when that was accepted and established, pass away?

¹ Cf. Dr. Selwyn, “Christian Prophets.”

² ἀντιλήψεις seems to bear a distinctly “medical” connotation.

These points may be considered in formulating an answer to such questions :

(i) All the gifts, apart altogether from any special interpretation of their several uses, belong to that relation between God and man which was established by the Incarnation of the Lord Christ. That relation is a permanent one, and though our understanding of it may change with growth of spiritual knowledge, yet the change (which is, of course, one of perception on our part) is always in the direction of greater fulness, never in the opposite direction.

(ii) There is much evidence that these gifts were operative in the Church till, certainly the fourth century (I think much later, but I do not want to overstate the case), long after the time when their possible "evidential" value would have passed away.

(iii) It is not without significance that the Apostle uses in v. 28, where he is describing the fundamental constitution of the spiritual Body, the Church, precisely the same terms as he uses in v. 18 to describe the fundamental constitution of the natural body. Of the members of both bodies he says, "God hath set them," and he uses a verb tense (aorist), which seems to mark definite completeness.

We must look in some other direction for the reason of their cessation, for that they *did* cease to be operative in the *ordinary* life of the Church is, I think, beyond dispute. They were, however, not withdrawn, as the lives of the saints abundantly show.

I believe that the change was due to a change in the Church's own ideal. Up to the fourth century she was a body struggling for recognition as a spiritual power against the whole force of the world's opposition. She only gained a limited recognition in the Roman Empire as a *religio licita*, as a burial guild which, as time went on and revealed larger pretensions on her part, had to be suppressed by persecutions. But through all that time she never lost her consciousness of herself as a Body enshrining Divine power—the Body of Christ, and the evidences of that power (*δύναμις*) were an unanswerable challenge to her foes.

But with the conversion of Constantine a new era set in. For the first time she found herself not merely recognized, but favoured by the world power. But the ideals of the world power and her own ideals differed *toto cælo* and the idea of "authority" (*ἐξουσία*,) began necessarily to loom large. Authority was also a gift direct from the Lord Himself—"Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven"—and the matter of apparently first importance now was how to use that gift—how to assert and maintain that authority. And from that day onwards the moral and spiritual authority of the Church has been her great pre-occupation, and the matter of her "power"—*δύναμις*—dynamic force has receded into the background.

Yet it has been continued in the double channel

of grace, the sacramental and the charismatic, and to-day our thoughts are being turned again to these expressions of her dynamic power, her vital force.

We should not be surprised that in the course of her history opposition has appeared between these two ideals, the idea of authority and the idea of vital power. But it may rouse some sense of surprise to find the two ideals of sacramental and charismatic grace sharply contrasted, even sometimes to the point of opposition. Yet it need not surprise us, for religious history is full of instances of the differences which have originated in the contrast between the "Priest and the Prophet" as enshrining different ideals of spiritual power.

But it is wise to remember that things which seem on a narrow view to be contradictory, are seen on a wider view to be complementary. And this is essentially true when we are considering the ministrations of grace within the Catholic Church.

I hope in the following lecture to consider with you ways in which the Church ministered the healing power through this double channel of sacramental and charismatic ministry, as a means of carrying out her Lord's command to heal the sick.

V. THE CHARISMATA IN CHURCH HISTORY (B)

S. James v. 14 : " Is any among you sick ? Let him call for the elders of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up ; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him."

WE continue our enquiry into the history of healing within the Church, and we note that the two channels—sacramental and charismatic—now tend to merge into the broad and deep channel of sacramental healing. But let me direct your attention first to two matters which I think are of importance to a right view of this great subject. The first is this : the quotation from S. James, with which I have headed this lecture, is generally held to be the starting point of Catholic usage and custom. It seems, therefore, of some importance to recall the fact that the old opinion that his Epistle was probably the earliest of the New Testament writings is no longer completely accepted. Research and criticism seem to show that the Epistle should rank among the latest rather than the earliest of the Christian writings. The importance of this to our subject is twofold. (1) It removes it from the " Jewish " atmosphere, which was formerly thought

to account for much of its matter, into a definitely Christian atmosphere of some stability, and, therefore, when S. James is writing about Unction, what he has to say is presumably coloured by Christian thought, not by Jewish thought. (2) The later date carries the implication that he is not writing about a new practice which has recently sprung up as a new adaptation of an old Jewish custom of consecration of Unction, but is writing about a Christian use of Unction which is already familiar, but has not yet become general.

And if we are inclined to date the practice of Unction from these words of S. James as the first formal indication of its use, we must not forget the record of S. Mark vi. 13, where the twelve being sent on their first mission of proclamation of the Kingdom, "anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them." The two records may be united together in our thoughts, for they lay stress upon two indispensable conditions for the efficacy of Unction. The early disciples anointed the sick as they went to proclaim "the Kingdom"—that was the source of this new power in the lives of men; S. James insists on the necessity for prayer, which from the foundation of the Kingdom has always been the means by which the minds and spirits of Christians have kept in living touch with that living power.

(a) The first thing to note about S. James's words is that they suggest a sacramental method of

help. It is not prayer alone which is contemplated, but prayer with the use of a definite impersonal means by which the help sought is conveyed to the sick person, and that means is what we call sacramental. The Lambeth Report, speaking of both Unction and laying on of hands, says (p. 20): "These rites have scriptural authority and are sacramental in the sense that a blessing is sought and received through the performance of outward and visible actions."

We shall have to develop this point further, but before doing so let us recall the purpose for which the sacred ministry of the Church is ordained. Her priests are to be "faithful dispensers of the word of God and of His holy sacraments." That is the charge to every ordained priest. And the reflection arises: In her ministry to the sick has not the stress in post-Reformation times been rather on her ministry of the word than on her ministry of the Sacraments? I do not mean here the general ministry of the Sacraments, such as Baptism, Penance, Holy Communion; but we have to remember the "restricted intention" of each Sacrament, and to ask whether we have been sufficiently alive to the fact that the dispensing of God's Holy Sacraments includes one at least whose "restricted intention" singles it out as specially appointed for the use and succour of the sick. We shall discuss later the reasons for this apparent over-emphasis on one part of the Church's ministrations.

Meanwhile, it is necessary for us to clear up what is sometimes a stumbling block in the way of people accepting Unction (for the moment we confine ourselves to this particular sacramental rite) as the right way of bringing the power of which we have been thinking to the help of our sick folk. It is sometimes said (it can scarcely be argued) that such a doctrine of Unction as a Sacrament presupposes some Presence in the consecrated oils analogous to the Presence in the Elements in Holy Communion. It is worth while, even at the risk of tedium, to point out the fallacy of this position. If you will recall the teaching of the Catechism on the Sacraments, the real position becomes clear. First the Catechism defines a Sacrament as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us"—a definition which will include Unction as a sacramental means of grace. But we have to go further. You will notice that the Catechism asks two questions with regard to the Sacrament of Holy Baptism—What is the outward visible sign or form? What is the inward and spiritual grace? But with regard to Holy Communion it asks *three* questions. (a) What is the outward part or sign? (b) What is the inward part or thing signified? (c) What are the benefits whereof we are partakers? Those questions strictly answer to ancient definitions with regard to the Sacraments. There are *always two* parts to any Sacrament. (a) the *sacramentum* or *materia sacramenti*—the outward sign, (b) the

virtus sacramenti—the inward grace conveyed by the Sacrament. Without these two parts it would not be a Sacrament. But there is also a third quality which belongs to the Sacrament of Holy Communion—the *res sacramenti* or thing signified. There is no *res sacramenti*, thing signified, in Holy Unction any more than there is in Holy Baptism, but there is the *materia sacramenti*—the outward sign or form, and there is the *virtus sacramenti*—the inner grace in both Sacraments. Holy Unction should then be regarded as analogous to Holy Baptism, not to Holy Communion. There is no change in either the oil of Unction or the water of Baptism, but both are set apart and blessed in order to become *signa efficacia* (effective signs) of the grace which they convey.

A word here before we resume our main subject may help us to clear thought about the action of sacramental grace in Holy Unction. It is as far as possible removed from the idea of magic, and it is equally far from being a meaningless ceremony expressing only pious desire. A Sacrament does not belong to either of those categories. But if we think of the action of grace, and especially of sacramental grace, as an “enhancement of personality” (which seems its most comprehensive description), and if we bear in mind the fundamental idea of the restricted intention of any and every Sacrament, then we may see how the grace of Unction may mean the enhancement of personality within the range of

its own "restricted intention," namely, the fitting of our faculties to perform the duties to which God calls us. That may be "immediately" by direct response to the Divine action upon the individual's personality; or it may be "mediately" by a quickening of the individual's receptivity of the ordinary means of healing given through the doctor's or surgeon's skill.

(b) In the early centuries of the Church's history healing was a part of her regular and constant experience. From Quadratus, the earliest Christian apologist (A.D. 126) to S. Augustine (A.D. 430) the testimony is constant, and our own Bede (A.D. 735) tells of the experience also, though his narrative relates to what are called "ecclesiastical" miracles. S. Chrysostom (A.D. 407) is specially interesting in that, though he constantly speaks in his Homilies of miracles having ceased, he did not include Spiritual Healing in this category, but refers to it as a matter of common occurrence.¹ We note these references in order to remind ourselves that the continuity of the healing power in the Church was in these post-Apostolic centuries as little questioned as it had been in the Apostles' own days. We notice, however, that the method of its manifestation had become fixed. It was a double method—by Unction and by laying on of hands. The mutual relation of these two methods has not, I think, been clearly defined, but in those early days, at least, no superior

¹ Cf. Dr. Dearmer's "Body and Soul," pp. 231 ff.

efficacy seems to be ascribed to either the one or the other. They are both sacramental in nature—there is no idea that the healing power conveyed by the laying on of hands is due to any personal power in the minister. The two lines (sacramental and charismatic) blend at times, but gradually attention becomes centred on Unction as the normal method. Possibly a distinction might be sought in the difference between a corporate act of the Church in Unction, and an individual ministration in the laying on of hands, but the lines cross so often in the general relation of these two methods of conveying grace in other sacramental rites (as e.g. in Confirmation in the West, where both Unction and imposition of hands by the Bishop were universal, while in the East, Unction only by the Priest, apparently without laying on of hands, was the rule) that it is precarious to try to draw any hard and fast line. It is possible that Unction became the recognized “sacramental means for healing,” because it lent itself more readily to liturgical or ecclesiastical discipline.

This continuous belief that healing power has been committed to the Church is witnessed to-day in the commission given to every Bishop consecrated by the English rite. “Heal the sick” is part of that commission, and it seems impossible to take this merely in a metaphorical sense, when we remember the source and history of the phrase. Its roots, of course, lie in the promise of our Lord to the Apostles, and historically it first appears

as part of the consecration of a bishop in the canons of Hippolytus (cent. 4, in present form, but from much earlier original), where it is prayed that he may be a good healer. A little later exactly the same prayer appears (except for the particularly episcopal elements) as a prayer of ordination to the priesthood, and it has in it the same petition in reference to healing. It may be right to suppose that in part the healing ministry of a priest may be a delegated ministry from the Bishop—as so much else of his ministry—but, on the other hand, this early prayer of Hippolytus suggests that in some way it was at that time regarded as inherent in the office of priesthood and not as a delegated ministry. The distinction between inherent and delegated ministry does not immediately concern us at the moment, but it is well to remember that along whichever line it seems to us to have come down, the point is this, that the gift of healing does not lie outside the ministerial functions of the priesthood to-day. It is also not without interest to English Church folk, while they think of the healing power being transmitted to and through the bishops as the successors of the Apostles to whom the power was originally committed, and as representing the Church in which that power resides, to recall the ancient custom of “Touching for the King’s evil.” It certainly was in practice in the time of Henry VII—there is an office for it in the Prayer Book of Charles II, and it continued in use down to the time

of Queen Anne. Dr. Johnson is said to have been the last person of distinction for whom it was used. At first sight it seems curious and anomalous that the Sovereign—a lay person—should have been supposed to have this gift of healing *qua* sovereign, and quite apart from any charismatic endowment. But it is explained by the fact that the sovereign is regarded as a *persona mixta*—partly ecclesiastical, partly lay,—and also by the fact that the sovereign, like the bishop, was always anointed to his office.

(c) At this point it will be useful to recall some ecclesiastical documents which will teach us what the Church has thought and taught about Unction, and then we may go on to consider the reasons which probably led to the decline in its use for healing. It would, of course, be easy to argue that it would be natural to use oil for prophylactic purposes, especially in hot countries. The first known prescription (Egyptian, *c.* 4200 B.C.) is for an unguent, and it is sometimes pointed out that the procedure in the parable of the Good Samaritan is in exact accordance with correct medical practice—the oil poured on the wounds to soothe and heal, the wine used as an antiseptic, to cleanse: and, perhaps, because of its beneficent qualities, oil was associated with religious rites of consecration. The shield of Saul is vilely cast away “as though it had not been anointed with oil.” The idea seems to be carried on in the use for healing of oil from the sanctuary lamps of which S. Chrysostom speaks

(Hom. XXXII). But however fitting the natural qualities of oil might be as a means of natural healing, there is clearly something more than this in the Church's mind in her solemn services of consecration or of dedication. Such solemn acts on her part must be linked with her general thought about her mission of healing. We have already seen that in the very early source of the Two Church Orders which we have now in the Canons of Hippolytus, there are prayers that the bishop at his consecration may be made "a good healer," and that afterwards the same petition is made at the ordination of priests. And other early Eastern liturgies, such as the *Æthiopic*, and the *Testamentum Domini* (A.D. 400) refer also to healing in the Church.

But the sacramentary of Serapion, Bishop of Thmuis (N. Egypt, 350 A.D.), is generally cited as one of the earliest and most explicit. In it it is directed that oil, water, and bread are to be blessed for healing. We may note these points, some of which are interesting, some important.

(i) The same prayer is used for blessing both the oil and the water, therefore it is likely that they are to be used for the same purpose.

(ii) The oil and water are to be "offered," i.e. brought by the lay people, evidently as representing the whole body of the Church. We remember the rubric in our own Communion Office that the bread and wine are to be provided "at the charges of the Parish"—the offering is a corporate act.

(iii) The oil and water are to be blessed by the bishop or by presbyters (plural), and when blessed to be given back to the people for private use.

Father Puller in his "Anointing of the Sick" quotes a passage from the ancient life of S. Geneviève of Paris (A.D. 412-502), which shows that the *oleum infirmorum* was administered in the West by lay persons, and sometimes by women.

(iv) The blessing took place after the post-Communion thanksgiving and before the final blessing, thus connecting the hallowing with the Presence in the Eucharist.

(v) (Important in view of later developments.) There were no prayers for the remission of sins or for other sanctifying grace. The prayer is for "healing power" . . . "so that every fever, every demon, and every sickness may depart through the anointing, and that the partaking of these things in the Name of Christ may be a healing medicine and a medicine of complete soundness."

(vi) The consecrated oil is intended to expel every *demon*, i.e. not only the body but the spiritual part of man is to be healed (but of sickness or "possession," not of sin).

(d) So far we have been thinking of that first period in the history of the Church, when Unction or the laying on of hands were thought of and used as her Sacraments for the sick. But a hardening and narrowing process was going on. The first note of it, I think, comes in a letter from Cornelius,

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Bishop of Rome (A.D. 251), to Fabius, Bishop of Antioch, in which he says that there are more "exorcists" than priests in his time in the Church at Rome, and he gives the actual numbers.¹ We know that exorcists had certain technical duties to perform in the preparation of candidates for Baptism, but that a particular class of persons who were not in Holy Orders should be entrusted with functions of this kind would inevitably tend to fix the idea that all exorcisms of any kind were centralized in a special group of ministers created for that sole purpose, and gradually the idea would spread that exorcism was only to be employed in the particular connection with which the exorcists were associated.

The narrowing process was specially noticeable (though in another direction) in connection with the practice of Unction. By the fifth century it had become customary that only priests did, in fact, anoint, but there was no synodical direction until the Council of Chalons (A.D. 813) when it was definitely promulgated. We note that up to this time anointing had apparently been *only* for the cure of sickness. But another idea had been slowly gathering force. Sickness was somehow connected with sin, and at the Council of Pavia (A.D. 850) it was definitely pronounced that by Unction "sins were remitted and as a consequence health was restored." Henceforth, the thought of Unction was

¹ Eusebius, H. E. vi. 43.

more and more closely connected with the idea of sin, less and less with the idea of recovery of bodily health. Theodulph, Bishop of Orleans (798–818), had already definitely taught that Unction was to be used as a preparation for the Viaticum, but this direction had not yet been generally accepted. It appears that the idea of healing was obsolete in the Roman Church by the twelfth century.

A most important event, important in setting the general thought of the Western Church with regard to Unction, was the Council of Florence (A.D. 1439), which definitely restricted anointing to dying persons. It was to be used only in preparation for the Viaticum. It is a startling contrast to Irenæus' vigorous denunciation of the Marcosians and Heracleitans, among whose heretical customs he notes their custom of anointing the dying (c. A.D. 180).¹

Apparently the Council of Trent in the next century made an attempt to retrieve the position, explaining the term Extreme Unction as the last of all the Unctions, but the Council goes on to speak of this last of the Unctions as *oleum exeuntium*, the Unction of the dying, and so stereotypes the idea which found formal utterance in the Council of Florence. It is this mediæval idea which has dominated Western thought ever since.² But it is important for us English Church people to remember that it

¹ Adv. Heres I, xiv. 3.

² But some modern Roman theologians strongly deprecate deferring Unction till the point of death.

is mediæval, and to put alongside it the appeal which our own branch of the Church makes to antiquity for the standards of her belief and practice, as the proper counterpoise to mediævalism. There is one striking inconsistency, and strangely enough it comes in the Prayer Book Office for the visitation of the sick. The appeal to antiquity is there shown in the first collect in the office, which comes from the Sarum use, and probably from a much older source, and is (as are all "primitive" prayers) an appeal to God for help for the sick man. But the rest of the office takes on the "forensic" colouring, which marked not only theological thought, but the whole thought of social relations in the sixteenth century. Wrong had been done, and therefore penalty must be exacted before there can be any hope of restoration to normal relations with the King. The only thing to do was to submit to the penalty, and from the fact that the penalty was being exacted to draw the certainty (even if conscience disputed it) that it was deserved. The colouring was that which belonged in civil life to the doctrine of the Divine right of Kings, and we have moved as far away from that point of view as an interpretation of God's will in religious thought as we have moved away from it in civil ideal. It is for this reason, I believe, and not for its somewhat archaic form or its merciless verbosity, that the Visitation Office has become practically disused to-day. But that is a terrible position—that the Church whose very purpose is

to minister the help of God to those in need, should officially have only a cautery in her hands with which to touch the wounds of men in their direst extremity. We may well give thanks that in the new Visitation Office now being considered by the House of Bishops, a different idea is under review. We may well pray that the Holy Spirit may guide our Fathers in God to wise decisions in this new opportunity.

(e) But apart from the Visitation Office there are other documents which, by teaching us the mind of the English Church on the use of Unction, teach us also her earlier thoughts about sickness. The Visitation Office in the first Prayer Book of Edward VI has in it the well known rubric and prayer of Unction, about which two things are to be noted. (a) The element of absolution conveyed by Unction of the various organs of the body which may have been the instruments of sin, is entirely absent, and it is, therefore, not to be regarded as being in line with the mediæval *oleum exeuntium*. It is true that there is prayer for pardon of offences, but that is in accordance with very early thought, and it is to be noted that this is entirely secondary. The first thought is for restoration of health. (b) We should note also that Unction (and this view of its purpose) is no new thing within the Church, nor is it a mere clinging to a laudable custom which had become rooted in the people's affections. For it is somewhat remarkable that in contrast to the general trend of the West towards what we have described as

the mediæval view of Unction (that its normal use was in preparation for death), there are two documents extant which show that the English Church had not followed this movement away from the earlier and, as we believe, truer conception of it. The first is in the Commentary on S. James' Epistle by the Venerable Bede (A.D. 709). Commenting on S. James v. 14, he says : " We read in the Gospels (S. Mark vi. 13) that the Apostles also did this : and at the present time it remains the custom of the Church that the sick should be anointed by the Presbyters with consecrated oil, and that the anointing being accompanied with prayer, they should be restored to health. And it is allowable not only to Presbyters, but, as Pope Innocent I writes, to all Christians to use that same oil for anointing in their own need, or in the need of any member of their household, which oil, however, may only be consecrated by Bishops."

The second reference is from the Bishops' book (1537), one of the important theological treatises—almost an official treatise—in defence of the Reformation. It notices various abuses and superstitions in regard to Unction, though the practice is to be retained and men are to be taught " to repute it among the other Sacraments of the Church." But it is clearly stated that " the grace conferred in this Sacrament is the relief and recovery of the disease and sickness wherewith the sick person is then diseased and

troubled, and also the remission of his sins if he be then in sin."

These quotations show the mind of the English Church in the eighth and sixteenth centuries, and there has been no pronouncement since to diminish their force. In both documents Unction is contemplated as a means of restoration to health, not as a means of preparation for death. In both documents it is thought of as within the sacramental system of the Church, and while the restricted intention of the Sacrament is emphasized, the reality of its action is no less clear. That is valuable in reminding us that at least in the minds of these teachers the thought of some mysterious quasi-magic power could no more be attached to the use of Unction than it could be attached to the use of any other Sacrament of the Church. Unction, in their view, needed order and prayer and faith to validate it exactly as the other Sacraments needed them. We are again reminded of the words of the Lambeth Report with regard to the form of ministry to be used: "For purposes of healing, prayer and Sacrament should be used in conjunction" (p. 19). We have already noted that the Report states definitely that Unction and the laying on of hands are to be regarded as sacramental rites.

(f) If, then, the witness is so consistent from such early times right down to the sixteenth century in our own branch of the Church, and if even since then there has been no definite enactment in the

contrary direction, it is well to ask if we can discover any reason to account for its disuse—for that it has ceased to be generally a Sacrament of experience cannot be disputed.

We have already discussed one of the most potent causes for its decline, viz. the restriction of Unction to what is known as Extreme Unction, i.e. a Sacrament for death and not for life. Without doubt this has been one of the greatest factors both in theological thought and in the popular mind.

But other causes have been at work throughout the West. Among them a very powerful one was the rise of subjective ideas on the doctrine of grace which began before the Reformation and culminated in it. That was not wholly a religious movement, but was part of a general movement of thought away from the Aristotelian theories and towards the Cartesian philosophy. But it resulted, among other things, in a decline from the clear cut scheme of sacramental idea and teaching which had been dominant for so long.

Probably the strange mediæval revival of Manichæism, which regarded matter as in itself evil, sharpened the contrast in men's minds between the theological account of nature and the account which nature was beginning to give of herself at the hands of natural science, and led to further misunderstandings of what began to be called sacramentalism.

In England the decay of the sacramental idea was quickened by the hideous misuse to which the most

sacred of religious rites was put by the operation of the Test Acts.

It would be quite wrong to ascribe the decline in the perception of the meaning and value of the Sacraments to the growth of scientific knowledge on materialistic lines. That knowledge does not account for it, though it may make recovery of the older standpoint more difficult.

It is too modern to account for it. We are accustomed to think of the growth of scientific knowledge as the glory of the nineteenth century, and the decline had set in long before that. Thought had been moving in another direction (philosophically in the direction of Determinism, theologically in the direction of Deism), and this had had very considerable effect on religious thought. But if we are inclined to think that the thought of to-day is set along materialistic ideas, it is well to recall the place which psychology is taking as an explanation on non-materialistic lines of human nature, or to remember that Bergson's vitalistic philosophy is an interpretation of life which is becoming more and more widely accepted.

I believe, myself, that the explanation is much more simple. It lies, I think (we have already discussed it), in that change of ideal within the Church which began in the fourth century and has continued almost to the present time. It is the change from her ideal of herself as the Body of Christ enshrining His life, His power (*δύναμις*), to

the ideal of herself as His Body expressing His authority (ἐξουσία). The change in her use of Unction seems strangely typical when regarded from this standpoint. At first it was used as a Sacrament of power for help to live, but later it was used as a Sacrament of authority to assure the passing soul that all was well as he went forward into the unknown.

In the next lecture I hope to consider with you some of the problems which make their call upon our faith and thought to-day, and some of the ways in which we ourselves may, perhaps, be allowed to offer *our* faith and thought towards a clearer understanding of the Church's Ministry of Healing.

VI. THE PRESENT POSITION

S. Matt. x. xviii. 18-20 : " All power (authority) hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you, and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world " (R.V.).

S. Mark xvi. 17 : " And these signs shall follow them that believe, in My name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover."

IN this last lecture of our course let us recall these passages from the Gospels as the law of the Church's life, the conditions of her work. It is Christ's perpetual Presence which gives validity and meaning to her mission, and is alone the source of power on which she may rely. And signs of that Presence and of that Power are not to be wanting. His Name is still to be the living bond between God's will and man's need. And if it seems to you that this is placing too heavy a weight on a not undisputed word (for the promise comes in what is known as the appendix to S. Mark's Gospel), you may look on to the record of the first years of the Church as you find them recorded in the Acts and in the Epistles, and you will find that promise acted upon and fulfilled. It is not so much the verbal

accuracy of one report which is the main question, but the actual experience of the Church, and about this the records leave us in no sort of doubt.

But there is a primary condition. "These signs shall follow them that believe." That atmosphere of faith is always an essential condition—but mark its real meaning. It is not belief only in the power to heal ; it is belief in God in Christ redeeming the world. It is to be the special characteristic of those who are baptized into the Threefold Name, and by that baptized into the Kingdom of power. Christian healing is only an outcome of Christian faith in God and of union with Him, but it is to be as real as the other experiences within that sphere. In its *effects* it seems to be concerned chiefly with the circumference of life—where we through our bodies or minds are in contact with the world around us. But every Christian knows that the living Spirit of God does not work in that way. He never merely touches the circumference of life, He always affects that circumference by working from the centre. Did not Milton stress that fact even of the human mind ?

" The mind by its own place and in itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

And faith gives entry to a new environment of soul which even yet we have not fully explored.

We have noted—and we must never lose sight of it—that each field of knowledge with which our special subject is concerned—the subject of healing

—has its own ground to cover. In its Report the Lambeth Committee recognizes this with clear distinctness, when it directs our attention to the three channels of healing power—material, mental, spiritual. The first of these three fields of knowledge has a well chartered survey of its powers and duties. The second, psychology, is rapidly marking out regions of being where its claims to help may be abundantly recognized. What then of this third sphere—the sphere of Spiritual Healing? It must not in any sense be thought of as a rival to the other two methods of healing. That would be to vitiate the whole position. But it is becoming increasingly clear that Spiritual Healing has a work to do which extends into regions of personality which are unreached by other means of healing. And, therefore, while we dare not make claims which cannot be made good, we dare not pass claims by which it is our duty to make good. In both physical and psychical methods progress has been empirical, in its proper sense, that is through practical experience, and this method will hold good in learning again the content of Spiritual Healing. For the Christian thinker it will always mean advancing in the knowledge of that “mystery” which is the New Testament name for the slow and gradual revelation of God’s purpose for the Church.

But there is another thing to notice, and it is important, for it seems to be a real law of growth in every sphere of knowledge, and may, therefore, be

supposed to be operative even in the realm of spiritual knowledge. The law seems to be constant of growth—decline—rebirth, and though the movement is, *on the whole*, one of progress, it never seems to move in a straight line or continuously in an upward direction. But it is to be noted that the rebirth never seems to start from the original point, but always from the point from which decline began. And if evolution be really adaptation to correspond with environment, that term might be applied to our spiritual growth. It would account for the “ups and downs” of spiritual knowledge and attainment, for while the whole sphere of spiritual knowledge is the “mystery” of God, that is, “something that was once obscure but is now in process of being made known,” we are aware both in our personal experience and in the experience of the Church that there are many conditions varying from time to time which affect our correspondence with that environment. The thought of the Church about Spiritual Healing, as well as our individual thought about it, is conditioned by forces of thought or of spirit which are active around us. That is because Spiritual Healing cannot rightly be separated from the Christian faith as a whole. There have been times when it was a part of the normal experience of the Church. There have been times when it has seemed to cease altogether. You may, for instance, contrast the experience of the first four centuries with the experience of the Church in England in the

eighteenth century. And if you confine your attention to Spiritual Healing by itself you will find it very difficult to discover an adequate explanation of the difference.

If Spiritual Healing is purely a manifestation of Divine Power, unconditioned in its operation by human thought, why was it so "ordinary" in the early period and so rare in the late period? You must take a wider view and think of Spiritual Healing as always and necessarily related to the general thought and life of the Church. It is the whole condition of her life which will give you the clue to the answer.

To take an illustration from another side of Church life: Evelyn in his diary records that on one Sunday—apparently an ordinary Sunday, not a great festival—there were over a thousand communicants at S. Martin's in the Fields. That was in 1688. The same experience is recorded in 1714. Yet in 1734, it is on record that on Easter Day in S. Paul's Cathedral there was one celebration of Holy Communion at midday with less than a dozen communicants. It would not satisfy us to seek the cause for this extraordinary change simply in a change in the popular estimation of the Blessed Sacrament—we should have to ask what led to that change of attitude and of practice. And we should find that the answer involves reference to social politics as well as to State practices in a surprising degree. The point then to remember is that,

however deeply true the belief of the Church may be, environment does play a very large part in the expression of that truth. It is only as we realize the reality of this inter-penetration that we begin to understand how supremely necessary it is that we should learn to see clearly the meaning of the essential truth which is at work amid all changes of environment.

So we think of the conditions to-day. The whole movement of thought is away from contrasts and towards synthesis. Possibly, that has not made itself articulate yet, but the tendency is unmistakable. And synthesis is not compromise. It is the patient fitting together of thoughts or of knowledge or of ideals, that each may have its proper place in the completed whole. You remember how Goethe's Time Spirit sings :—

“ 'Tis thus at the loom of Time I ply

And weave for God the garment thou seest Him by.”

The threads are many-coloured and some of them are golden, but they are of value only as they become part of the tapestry which forms the garment of God.

And so I would suggest that our great duty to-day is the duty of co-ordination of knowledge. Spiritual Healing is, we firmly believe, a very real thing ; our present duty is, recognizing this, not to confuse its manifestations, but humbly and fearlessly to investigate its meaning and its bearing upon the special problems with which it deals. That may seem to be the special province of thinkers and teachers, and so

in a way it is. But the thought and the faith of ordinary people are often the channels of power for informed conclusions. And so we must not shrink from taking our share. Every avenue of healing is to be explored and to be used, and their mutual relation determined, if the synthesis is to be valid. Perhaps the most obvious duty for ourselves on the intellectual side at the moment is to be clear as to the distinction between psychological and spiritual effects. Though the line between them is so fine, yet I think it is very real so far as our present knowledge goes. We can, perhaps, see the distinction most clearly if we refer not to effects, but to the origins from which those effects spring. In psycho-therapy the result flows from the action of faculties of the human mind. It is true that in certain given cases the active suggestion may be a religious one. But it is still purely the action of our own human faculties. It is, perhaps, in the first case hetero-suggestion—i.e. a suggestion coming from outside ourselves, but that never becomes effective until it has grown to be auto-suggestion. But it is all the time an action of human faculties—our own or another's. In Spiritual Healing, on the other hand, the action we believe originates beyond and outside of human faculties altogether. It is part of the redemptive work of the Lord Christ, His work, that is, of freeing mankind from the thralldom of evil. It is what we know in other ways as "grace," given to us, and though it is probably

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true to say that grace works through what we must call psychological faculties, it does not take its origin there. We do not create grace—we learn to correspond to it. The Lambeth Committee noted, as it was bound to do, that it had so far found no evidence “of any cases of healing which cannot be paralleled by similar cures wrought by psychotherapy without religion,” but it adds, that “this does not detract from the good done by many religious healers; and, where the religious influence is of a wise and reasonable kind, greater and more permanent results may be expected than from non-religious methods.” That sentence has puzzled and disappointed many people, but it need not do so. Parallels, though they are exactly alike, are distinct; and the likeness does not invalidate either of the two lines which form the parallel. Perhaps we should look for their *differentia* in the distinction—a very real one—between being cured and being healed. The one may conceivably go no further than the circumference—the body. The other is more radical and reaches down to the centre of personality.

But Spiritual Healing has its own problems which call for quickened faith and insight. We must always remember that even those who are best qualified to guide us have, in reality—as they would be the first to acknowledge—only touched the veriest fringe of a great subject. It is only by slow and humble steps we can go forward. Such questions as these are bound to arise—and at present we can

only guess at their answer : Why was it possible for S. Paul to write, " Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick ? " (2 Tim. iv. 20) or to speak of Epaphroditus in terms of such anxiety (Phil. ii. 27), or why was he, so full of zeal and activity for the Master's sake, apparently so constantly subject to ill-health ? How was it that he had to bear the " stake in the flesh " as he went about his work ? The answer for Christians cannot be that God has failed—may it not be better for us to say we do not yet understand ? It may be that certain conditions have yet to be fulfilled in regard to the corporate life of the Church, or perhaps in regard to the individual character. The principle is clear to us—God has declared His good will in Christ, and part of that good will, as we learn in the life of the Lord Himself, is the setting us free from evil even in the physical sphere. But the application of that principle has slowly to be discovered, has slowly to be made, and made afresh, perhaps, again and again in the never ceasing changes of our condition. But the Pauline " In Christ " (*ἐν Χριστῷ*) is the sphere in which the Christian must think of illness as of all the other circumstances and conditions of his life, and in that sphere we may find answers to our questions which will lead us along the way of understanding.

If, for instance, our thoughts turn towards the corporate life of the Church, and we try to see what may be the conditions which are necessary there for a true ministry of healing, we shall have to

remember that the Church has to express the mind of Christ as well as to be the Body through which He is pleased to work. And the mind of Christ as we learn it in the Gospels is always set on the glory of God. We know that the road He travelled led to the Cross, but that was the road to victory, not to defeat. That is to say, the Lord Christ did not avoid difficulties involving keenest suffering. He recognized these facts as the condition in which the ultimate will of God was to be accomplished. They were the conditions over which He triumphed, and this is sufficient in itself to indicate that they were not the substance of God's will. The Church has always to remember the Lord's own warning, "He that loveth his life shall lose it." Life or health for its own sake is not to be sought, but life or health *for the glory of God*, that is an indispensable condition.

Or, if we think of the meaning of suffering "in Christ" for the individual there are some matters about which we must seek to think clearly. For instance, even on purely physical grounds, pain and disease do not seem to be interchangeable terms. Pain may be beneficent, it seems in some ways to be a condition of progress, calling out powers of adaptation which might without it remain undeveloped—or it is a symptom, a sign-post pointing to dangers which, without it, might be unsuspected, or it is a symbol of the effort which life is making to assert itself against a destructive power. All these things may be attached to the meaning of pain.

But with regard to disease, our thought is different. In itself it leads to deterioration, and finally to destruction. It is not a condition out of which, in itself, a higher level can be reached. It is progressive towards extinction of life, not towards its fuller expression. "Every sort of curative treatment," says the Lambeth Report (p. 14), "assumes, obviously, that disease is an evil to be combated. Theologically stated, this means that health, or an orderly condition of body, mind and spirit, is God's primary will for all His children ; and that disease, as a specific violation or falling short of this orderly condition, is not only to be combated, but to be combated in God's Name and as a way of carrying out His Will."

Here then we have to be very careful in our thought about the use God makes of disease in regard to individual character. I shall have to return to this later, but here I want to emphasize a point which often becomes a difficulty in men's minds. Often we hear it said or implied that because sickness not seldom has a purifying effect on character, therefore we must believe that it comes from God. But the fact that God uses sickness to this end is no argument at all that He sends it. Even when specific sickness follows on specific violation of His laws, it seems to be more in the sequence of natural cause and effect than as direct action. The cause is evil and the consequence is no less evil. There is a very close parallel between the presence of sin in the world and the presence of disease. They are both clearly

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permitted by God, but can we say that disease is sent by Him any more than we can say that sin is sent by Him? It would be better to think of them both as due to a central disharmony with which God is slowly dealing in the ages of mankind's history. The revelation in the Lord Christ is complete and perfect in itself. We but very slowly learn its meaning and grow into its power.

(d) There are some passages in the New Testament dealing directly with the cure of sickness, or with the endurance of it, which warn us against hasty conclusions, and would therefore strengthen and train our faith. We are quite clear in our belief that disease is in itself an evil (Lambeth Report, p. 14). We believe that our Lord showed us how the good will of God would deal with that evil in "immediate" ways. But we may not forget that while the revelation of Jesus Christ was a revelation of the absolute, we ourselves live under conditions in which the relative is for us the dominating factor. And I think that these New Testament passages remind us of that fact, and would well repay study in this particular connection.

If, for instance, S. Matthew (xii. 15) tells us of the crowds which followed Christ on one occasion, that "He healed them all," S. Luke (ix. 11) tells of another occasion, when equally eager folk came to Him, that "He cured those who needed to be healed"—as though there were some discrimination in His acts.

Or that strange incident of the gradual healing of the blind man who "saw men as trees walking" (S. Mark viii. 22). There is no indication at all in the narrative that the blind man's faith failed in any degree, so that the Lord's healing power was at first ineffective. But there is very striking indication in the preceding verses that the faith and perception of the disciples were at fault. And it is hardly possible to escape the thought that there is a connection between the two incidents. It may be that the discovery of their lack of perception in spiritual things came as a shock to the Master, and for the moment disturbed His poise and harmony. It may be that the revelation to them of their own spiritual blindness had so acted upon them that for the moment it deprived their Master of that corporate faith which He was building up as a necessary accompaniment, even a necessary condition for the fulness of His work. It looks as though He fails to find the help of the faith of His friends and has, so to say, to call up the deeper reserves of His own faith in His mission in order to accomplish the miracle.

These passages suggest to us problems connected with the conditions in which the healing power may be exercised, but they do not suggest any doubt at all that the healing power is really there.

There are two other passages to which I direct your attention, both in the writings of S. Paul, which suggest thoughts about the reason or the purpose of suffering, and which help us to understand and

perhaps to find the first stages of an answer to a problem which continues to trouble many to-day as it has always done—the question why suffering is allowed to continue, even when we might hope that the grace of healing should find rightful opportunity of action.

The first instance is the well-known one of the “thorn” or “stake in the flesh” (2 Cor. xii. 7). It is, of course, a frequent matter of debate whether the “thorn in the flesh” refers to physical illness or disability, or to some other kind of infliction. I venture to think that the terms in which S. Paul speaks can hardly be taken to refer to anything that does not at least involve physical matters. But whether that be so or not, there are two very important facts stated by S. Paul as to the source and purpose of the trouble. He is quite clear as to the source. Though the disability is permitted by God, it is “a messenger of Satan to buffet me”; and the purpose for which that buffeting was permitted was two-fold: first, “By reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations wherefore that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given me a thorn in the flesh.” There we get a glimpse of God’s use of suffering. Then, in answer to that earnest prayer that the “thorn” might be removed, comes the greater revelation, “My grace is sufficient for thee, for My power is made perfect in weakness.” When we consider S. Paul’s personal devotion to his Lord, and his incessant activities on

behalf of the Gospel, activities which must have seemed an absolute necessity to the various churches of which he was the spiritual father, and when we remember that S. Luke was a doctor, and if tradition is right, one of the seventy whom the Lord had personally commissioned to heal the sick as part of the proclamation of the Kingdom, and we put alongside this the continued disability, questions of the deepest importance about Spiritual Healing make themselves heard. Are we to teach people that provided their faith is sufficiently strong, provided they use the necessary means they are sure of a cure? Assuredly not. To do that would seem terribly wrong and terribly dangerous. It is perfectly clear that people who use these means humbly and faithfully are not always cured, and there is the very gravest danger to faith if they are led to expect it unconditionally. It would be to take the meaning of the Cross out of a large area of human experience. But when we say this let us remember that physical suffering is not the deepest meaning of the Cross. It may accompany the bearing of the Cross, but the fact of the Cross goes vastly deeper than that. It is surely the point where the love and holiness of God touch the disharmonies of human life, and it is the point where God openly triumphs over those disharmonies. And so we may turn for some enlightenment to S. Paul's letter to the Colossian Church, where (i. 24) he tells us what he has learnt about it. "I rejoice in my sufferings for your

sake and fill up on my part that which is left over of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body's sake which is the Church." And while we cannot believe that our Lord suffered sickness or disease, it is significant that S. Paul uses a word which denotes bodily suffering in his own case, and links it with the afflictions of Christ. Our thoughts go at once to S. Matthew's interpretation of Isaiah's prophecy: "Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases." We understand a little about what is called vicarious faith—we see one aspect of it illustrated in the Gospels in the four friends of the paralytic, or in the nobleman at Capernaum, or in the Syro-Phœnician woman, but we generally think of vicarious suffering as confined to the Christ Himself. That is true, but if we follow S. Paul's thought we shall see that vicarious suffering, as it is set forth in the New Testament, is not confined to the Incarnate Person of the Christ only, but it goes on also in His Body, the Church. Christ our Lord won the great victory. Sin and disease and death are no longer supreme. But lesser battles have still to be fought. The victory has to be made good. For His redemption of the world from the power of the enemy is a continuous process.

So perhaps we may begin to understand something about the meaning of continued sickness. May it not be that some elect souls are called to the honour of sharing with Him in the gaining of the victory as well as sharing in the fruits of it? Called to hold

some outpost of the Kingdom against the enemy in the strength of a will growing more deeply into unity with the Father's will? Sickness, we believe, is not according to the primary will of God, but it may be a condition due to the disharmony of life as it is in which His will for good may slowly become more clearly known and more gladly done. We may think of men and women called to such a high vocation as really following their Lord along the shadowed path of self-renunciation which led from Tabor to Calvary. On Tabor the transfiguration shows us the Incarnate Master making His final choice. By personal right as Perfect Man He might pass in that perfect humanity to the next stage of life along a sunlit road of glory without passing through the grave and gate of death. He is aware of that personal right, but aware of it only to put it aside. For, if He claimed it, the world would be no better for His coming, His brethren would still be held in thrall by the power of evil. But the victory and the Kingdom are to be won on Calvary, not on Tabor, and so He puts aside for His brethren's sake His personal right, and faces the suffering which that act involves. May we not dare to think that something of this quality of self-renunciation enters into the Christian's bearing of continued sickness—foregoing a freedom which, if he could see clearly, might be a personal "right" (if we may speak of it in that way) growing out of our membership in Him, in order that, following the Master along His own road, he may

share in the winning of a victory which has a larger range than can be measured by his own individual life?

Spiritual Healing may be truly at work here in its highest sense, deepening, cleansing, strengthening the living union with the living Christ in will and work, which are at length seen truly to be not ours, but His.

So we come back to first principles. "The Kingdom of God has come," "Go and heal the sick." If the command is to be fulfilled at all it can only be done as we try to realize what lies behind it—"The Kingdom of God has come." The realization of that fact has its own problems for us to-day—as it has always had—whether in itself or in relation to the various aspects of our life. We believe that Spiritual Healing is a real fact because Christ our Lord is real. Whatever form that healing takes, whether release from physical or from spiritual evil, the fact of the power at work is a reality, and we believe that the channels through which that power reaches our needs are the channels of faith and prayer and Sacrament. And, as in other relations of life, those things are not in opposition to true life, but lift that life up to new and higher levels, so we may believe that Spiritual Healing works in the same way. And so we may ask for ourselves how we may help this work, which we believe the Master wills to do to-day in and through His Body the Church.

I would put first the need of faithful study. We

must learn as much as we can, not only about the subject itself, but about its relation to the other means of healing which are the commonplace of experience. Whatever your opportunities of study may be, while you put first what I may call the affirmative side, do not neglect those criticisms which from time to time make themselves heard. But do not think the study can be lightly done. It is only as we progress slowly in knowledge that conviction of the truth deepens. Be careful in your teaching of others. To teach them that if only they pray hard enough, for instance, they will be cured, would be entirely wrong. Teach them to rest in the love of God so completely that His love may *really* work in them and on them, and that as their wills grow into unity with His will, the power of that love will be more effective. And so you will teach them that God does not send sickness—it is part of the disharmony in which He has to work, but that through that disharmony, which is our condition of life, He can and does reach and touch us with a Father's hand. And always the object in view must be the glory of God in free and faithful service. That will mean not resignation—a passive acceptance—but submission—an entering into His will, co-operating with Him in bringing about His purpose of Redemption.

And there is another thing which I believe to be of primary importance. The work of Spiritual Healing is committed to the Church and is exercised

by the Church as the Body of Christ. It is therefore a corporate work, and our individual thought or faith must be as individuals whose life and whose work is wholly conditioned by that fact. What we may know or learn we know and learn as members of that Body. It should be regarded as a part of the corporate experience of that Body, and we shall bring it in as our contribution to its whole efficiency. But that will ultimately mean that our work is to be done under the guidance and direction of the Body, not as a single, exclusive individual effort.

And we shall carry on this thought of corporate life and therefore corporate responsibility into our prayers, our intercessions for the sick. Intercession will then mean not the prayer of one individual for another individual—though that, indeed, has its full place and value—it will not certainly mean just the bringing of some individual need before God and then leaving it to Him—but it will mean in its fullness a corporate act of the Church at work consciously and actively on God's behalf to create a channel through which He can pour the power of His love upon an individual need. We shall not forget that the Lord Christ shows us in the Gospels how that His work cannot be done freely except through channels which only those who are learning to know and understand can make for Him. It is a great responsibility, but it is a great honour. It is a way in which His own prayer may begin to be fulfilled—"Hallowed be Thy Name in earth as it is

in heaven, Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Thy will done joyously—actively—in the realized power of the Christ to set His people free from disabilities of spirit of soul or body, so that in their measure they may serve God fully.

NOTE ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

During one of the discussions following the lectures a question was put asking for some information about Christian Science. It may be useful to print here some of the points in the answer. The extracts quoted below are from c.c. IX and XIV of "Science and Health," by Mary G. B. Eddy—an official textbook of Christian Science. I am indebted to a pamphlet, "Healing in the Church," by the Rev. W. Maddock, for them.

(1) The strength of Christian Science lies in its use of a natural law—the control which mind has over body—That law is used in all religions, but it does not constitute a religion.

(2) Good and God are identical and—love.

"The God principle is omnipresent and omnipotent."

"Principle and its idea is one, and this one is God."

"There is no intelligence but God."

The pantheistic tone of these quotations is evident.

There is nothing of a Personal transcendent God.

- (3) God knows nothing of anything which is contrary to love and is entirely unaware of sin or evil or disease. Yet "God" is omniscient and omnipotent.

Contrast Christ's parables of the Prodigal Son, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, etc., with their sense of sorrow at loss and joy at recovery.

- (4) There is no doctrine of the Personality of God and therefore no doctrine of the Trinity.
(5) "Matter is mortal error."

"Error is unreal because untrue."

"Christian Science reveals man as the idea of God and declares the corporeal senses to be mortal and erring illusions."

That is to be set against the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation.

- (6) "Jesus is not God."

"Jesus is the name of the man who, more than other men, has presented Christ . . . Jesus is the human man . . . but to reach His example and to test its unerring according to his rule, healing sickness, sin and death, a better understanding of God as Divine Principle, Love, rather than personality or the man Jesus, is required."

This is a definite rejection of the Incarnation, the cardinal belief of the Christian Church.

- (7) Man. Christian Science distinguishes between man and mortals. Mortals do not really exist ; they are what we *call* men—i.e. material concepts. Man is spirit enclosed in body—but the body is a delusion. Man is always perfect, his present condition is an illusion.

“ Man is incapable of sin, sickness and death.”

- (8) Sin is a negative idea. Badness is a false conception.

“ Evil is but an illusion and has no real basis.”

“ Because soul is immortal, soul cannot sin.”

There is therefore no need for atonement or for a Redeemer.

- (9) Matter is unreal and can never manifest spirit.

“ Spirit, matter’s opposite.”

“ What is termed matter is unknown to spirit.”

This is reminiscent of the gnostic theories of the second and third centuries, rejected as much on philosophical as theological grounds.

VII. THE LAMBETH REPORT¹

(1924)

THE Report of the Committee appointed in accordance with Resolution 63 of the Lambeth Conference, 1920, was presented to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1923, and while it yet awaits acceptance by the Conference in order to give it full authority, nevertheless it should be studied as expressing the reasoned conclusions of a body of clergy, doctors and psychologists specially charged with the duty of investigating the question and advising the Church upon it. It does, in fact, afford guidance for thought as well as for practice in the ministry of healing, and it indicates lines along which further investigation may move. There are some clear constructive elements in it which demand close and serious study by those who are seeking to understand aright the Church's duty and opportunity in this great matter. Among them the following are some of the most important :—

- (a) "Every sort of curative treatment assumes obviously, that disease is an evil to be combated . . . in God's Name and as a way of carrying out His will " (p. 14).

¹ Published by the S.P.C.K., Price 6d.

That at once gives us a standpoint from which to work, and it is important not only in suggesting a right direction of thought as the basis of the Church's part in the ministry of healing, but it is even more important in indicating the common ground on which all healing work stands—the work of doctors and psychologists as well as the distinctively “religious” work of the Church. The statement is a challenge to the ordinary idea that sickness comes from God, and will make us think again of the grounds on which that idea rests. In particular it should set us to re-examine the teaching of the Church about sickness, and if we did so we should find that the popular idea is largely due to a particular view of life which dominated thought as a whole in the seventeenth century, and which still retains its hold in certain directions. The contrast between that view and the earlier teaching of the Church is so strong as in some respects to be startling. The movement of religious thought to-day is quite distinctly more in a “vital” direction than in the direction of the fixed and rigid system demanded by our forefathers, but while we remember this we must not forget that vitality expresses itself through its own laws of operation as clear and definite as any other laws of nature or of grace of which we are cognizant.

(b) “The power which heals the body makes use of three avenues of approach :—

(i) Material, as surgery, drugs, diet, etc.

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(ii) Psychical, as suggestion and different forms of mental analysis.

(iii) Devotional and sacramental " (p. 10).

The distinction drawn between (ii) and (iii) will be recognized as of primary importance. Whatever the mutual relation between these three avenues through which the healing power reaches us, the recognition of the devotional and sacramental channel as a distinct method of the Divine activity is of very great significance. It should serve completely to clear up any confusion between psychical and sacramental means of healing. They may sometimes be correlated in practice, but none the less they are in themselves entirely distinct.

The report goes on to mark this distinction by noting the sphere of action of devotional or sacramental healing: " Within the Church it (*sc.*, the direct appeal to God) had occasioned the revival of systems of healing based on the redemptive work of our Lord. They all spring from a belief in the fundamental principle that the power to exercise Spiritual Healing is taught by Christ to be the natural heritage of Christian people who are living in fellowship with God, and is part of the ministry of Christ through His Body the Church " (p. 13).

(c) " Spiritual Healing aims definitely at the purifying and strengthening of the whole life, especially the spiritual life as the centre of personality. . . . The success of the treatment will not consist simply in the achievement of bodily

health, but in raising the man's whole nature to a higher plane. The result, when attained, will be spiritual, and indicates a spiritual cause at work " (pp. 14, 15).

This will suffice to remind us that, as in all other sacramental ordinances, the centre of operation is the spirit and not the body. It is a most important standpoint for the right understanding of Spiritual Healing.

(d) " For purposes of healing, prayer and sacrament should be used in conjunction " (p. 19) . . . " These rites (*sc.*, Unction and laying on of hands) have scriptural authority, and are sacramental in the sense that a blessing is sought and received through the performance of outward and visible actions."

Here is a very important declaration of the " Objective " gift conveyed by sacramental healing, for a sacrament is " an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself as a means by which we receive the same and a pledge to assure us thereof." The definition not only declares the nature of Spiritual Healing, but in so doing reminds us that it must be used in the religious spirit and with real preparation of the minister and the recipient.

(e) The question of Healing Missions is dealt with in a long footnote on page 17, and the cautionary reserve of its tone should be noted.

Finally, the Report suggests the appointment of

“ a permanent committee of clergy, doctors and psychologists to advise the authorities of the Church on these matters.”

With such a document as this before us we have lines of investigation and of practice laid down along which we may move. In practice our duty, while it will involve that “ hedging of the Sacrament ” which we already exercise in regard to all the other Sacraments through the Church's own system of discipline, will be to teach people how to use this Ministry of Healing. That will not exclude the “ Evangel ” of this part of the Gospel, but it will, by emphasizing its sacramental character, guard the approaches to it. In thought and study we must seek to co-ordinate the knowledge which comes to us through well tested experience, not only in this particular channel of healing power, but also in those which are allied to it. We may be content that progress be slow so long as it is sound ; we may accept the healthy criticism which will keep us from rash commitments, but none the less we must move forward in humble faith, intent only on learning to understand what the will of the Lord is and how He would make it effective through the ministry of His Church.

VIII. THE CLERGY AND THE MINISTRY OF HEALING (1922)

THE subject of this paper is the ministry of a charisma rather than a charismatic ministry, and before developing the subject there are one or two preliminaries to be stated by way of defining the standpoint from which it is approached. The points will be familiar, but it will be well to recall them to mind.

(a) The Church is the Body in which the living Christ carries on through the Spirit His work in the world to-day. All her spiritual work is the expression of this inner central vitality. We have to think of any spiritual gift, and of any ministration of it with reference to that Body, i.e. in terms of corporate life first, and of individual qualification second.

(b) S. Augustine's principle is important—that the Sacraments are Sacraments of the whole Body, the Church. Spiritual Healing within the Church can only be thought of as sacramental, i.e. it is the redemptive power of the Christ exercised in a particular direction, but exercised under the same conditions as in other corporate manifestations of that power, e.g. faith, intention, etc.

And the Church as a body has an inherent right

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to regulate all sacramental ministrations, including Sacramental Healing.

(c) It must be borne in mind not only that the Church is, in Bishop Jeremy Taylor's phrase, "an extension of the Incarnation," but that her Sacraments exactly correspond to the constitution of man's nature. He is a spiritual being in whom spirit and body are one complete entity. It is the disharmony of his whole nature with its true centre which is the priest's problem in dealing with sickness of body, just as it is his problem in dealing with sickness of soul. Man is truly theo-centric, not auto-centric, and it is the whole work of the Church and of her ministry to restore that true relation between man and God.

These conditions will be found to govern the whole relation of the priest to the ministry of healing.

How, then, is that relation to be defined? The ordination charge itself provides the answer to our question: "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the Holy Sacraments in the congregation, where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto."

That is the expression of the Church's intention for every priest, her definition of our position within the Body as "stewards of the mysteries of God." There is the duty of teaching and of administering, and there is the duty of obedience—"Where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto."

And in connection with our special subject we

may not forget that the bishop's own commission at his consecration includes "healing the sick," and that in the administration of Sacramental Healing we may, as in other Sacraments, be exercising a delegated ministry. The power may be regarded as inherent in the priesthood as a ministry within the Body, just as the power to absolve the soul is inherent in the priesthood as a ministry within the Body; but the authority to exercise the ministry is derived from the Church acting through constituted authority. Each of the three heads of the ordination charge should then be considered in its bearing on our subject.

(a) Teaching— which will include training, for "as you teach you learn, as you learn you teach." It is unfortunately true that no official provision is made for the training of a priest when he has once reached that degree. Except for occasional lectures or courses, which he may or may not attend after his ordination to the priesthood, his training is officially complete with his passing out of the diaconate. We are left very much to ourselves, and so when we speak of training for the Ministry of Healing we must mean, largely, self-training. There is urgent need for some well thought out plan to be submitted for the consideration of the bishops, by which they might commission some approved men as instructors, much as they now commission certain priests to act as special missionaries or for certain other purposes. Possibly some such plan as that adopted for the National Mission may eventually become practicable.

But as things are, we must for the moment confine ourselves to self-training. And here the axiom with which we have been familiar from our school days—"verify your references"—is of the greatest importance. To take an instance: One of the greatest difficulties we have to encounter is that the accepted view of sickness as a visitation of God appears to have the official sanction of the Church in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick. That is, alas, true for the moment, but there is something else to be said before we accept that as the final position. There is the practical answer—eloquent of the pressure which we priests feel upon us—of the practical disuse of the Visitation Office, not on the ground of its archaic language or its somewhat copious length, but simply because it fails to satisfy either priest or patient that the view there set forth is the ultimate truth in a great problem. But when we come to "verify our references," we find (1) that what comes from the ancient sources does not take this view at all, and (2) that the elements which do lend colour to that view are entirely due to a period in post-Reformation theology when the governing factor in thought, civic, political, social, as well as theological and religious, was what is called the "forensic" view, which, based on a particular theory of government, demanded satisfaction for the least breach of that theory, as a condition of restoration to normal relations.

It is paralleled to-day by the widespread mis-

application of the Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest to all the relations of corporate civil life, and, in its measure, to theological thought. And it is to be remembered that the dominant theological doctrine of the post-Reformation period was the doctrine of the Atonement. The result was a view of man's relation to God which starts from man's failure, and is regarded as drawn in such sharp forensic lines, that a theory of satisfaction was the inevitable outcome. And one reason for the disuse of the Visitation Office to-day is that we are beginning to learn that the Atonement cannot be understood apart from the Incarnation. And it is the Incarnation which teaches us the first lessons about God's love for man, and about His power and will to help him, and we are beginning to see that sickness and suffering, as well as the other failures of life, do most assuredly come within the orbit of this great and central truth.

So, then, our self-training in this great ministry must start from this theological standpoint—the meaning and the implications of the Incarnation.

But our self-training is not for ourselves, but for our people, and so we must not only think things out for ourselves, we must learn all we can of the dominating forces which are moulding the ideas and thoughts of those whom we are called to serve. Scientific psychology, for instance, is one of those dominating forces which may be of enormous help if we learn through it the right avenues of

approach to those who need our help. It has already completely changed the merely materialistic outlook of many thinkers not so very long ago. It has, indeed, opened up new avenues for exploration in theology as in other departments of thought. But we must avoid the pitfall of becoming amateur psychologists, still less amateur psycho-therapists. That is not our business, except, perhaps, in a quite secondary way. We are first and always to be stewards of the mysteries of God. So our thinking, our reading, our self-training must all be brought within the circle of our soul's communion with God. Thought, study, prayer, the three essential elements of the inner priestly life, must all have their place in our work as ministers of healing, and all must find their centre—as the rest of our ministry does—in the central vitality of the Blessed Sacrament, where both body and soul may be touched by Divine power.

But again, the *corporate conditions* of our ministry demand some special effort towards their effective recognition, and I would venture to urge the real need of getting into touch with such expressions of corporate ministerial life as lie within our reach. If for the moment the diocese is beyond practical compass, the Ruri-decanal Chapter might be within our reach as a local centre for corporate thought and prayer and study. Or, perhaps, here and there a "Summer School" might be possible for the first beginning of this study. It should not be regarded so much as a new subject of study, as a fresh pre-

sentment of one side at least of the living Gospel of the living Christ. Or it might be possible to arrange for Retreat Conferences, to be used by those who want to learn about the subject. There are signs of a growing desire among the clergy to learn about it, but there is a wholesome fear of becoming "cranks," and there is, too, some hesitation about the sanctions of what seems to not a few to be a new departure. We have to remember that the Commission to heal was part of our Divine Lord's Commission to His Church. There is no evidence that the gift of power and the command to use it have ever been withdrawn, and, if it is in abeyance, the cause is surely to be sought in our failure to obey, not in the withdrawal of the Divine will for the good of men. The only way to its recovery is by a quickened and informed faith in the living presence of the Lord Christ, working in and through His Body the Church to-day, and some steps towards such recovery might be found possible in the atmosphere of devotion and instruction which is implied in a conference of this kind.

(b) *The discipline of the Priest* in relation to this ministry. As his training in thought and knowledge must be largely *self*-training, so his training in discipline must be largely *self*-discipline. But the colour of action rather than of repression must be given to this discipline, that is we must think of it from the point of view of what we ought to do rather than what we ought not to do—what are the claims upon us of this aspect of our ministry of the Gospel?

For this reason we take the second clause in our Priestly Commission—"to minister the Holy Sacraments in the congregation"—as the key to the position.

And the question at once arises in our minds, "Can we include the Ministry of Healing as part of that charge?" The difficulty, as I apprehend it, is this: We believe that the laying on of hands in unbroken descent from Apostolic days does convey to us the grace of the Priesthood for the due performance of the Priestly Office, but we think of the gift of healing as a special charisma, a gift, that is, which is not transmitted as the grace of Holy Orders is transmitted, but is freely poured out upon chosen instruments within the Body, the Church.

There is no doubt that the charismata of healing are so bestowed upon lay members of the Church; they are not confined to the Priesthood. But they are given to them, according to the New Testament, not as individuals standing alone, but as members of the Body. It is significant that in the two lists in 1 Corinthians xii., the various gifts are first described as manifestations of the Spirit, and even when, in the second list, various ministries are described, they are still regarded not as emphasizing the individual ministry, but the corporate possession. And we as ministers of Christ's Body stand joined in direct descent with those to whom, as the first ministers, the first representatives of the Body, the command was given to heal the sick. Can we then even

regard it as an open question? Have we not as stewards of the mysteries committed to us the dispensing of this Sacrament of the body as truly as the dispensing of the other Sacraments of grace?

The charisma of healing (we may here think of it as a whole, though it stands in the plural in the New Testament) is *never* in the Epistles the mere natural power of the individual, it is always regarded as the power of the Incarnate and glorified Christ at work for the redemption of man's physical nature from the thralldom of evil. Must we not humbly believe that He who has called us to minister to His people has not denied to us this ministry of help to those who need? The grace of healing is part of the Divine treasury of the Church, and we have as stewards to minister it to our people from out of the abundance of grace enshrined therein.

It is necessary for us to consider this with regard to the *laying on of hands*. With regard to the use of Unction the problem is different. There, it will lie in the direction of recovery of truer teaching about it; and the need for this recovery is urgent. Not infrequently we hear of Holy Unction being used only in the "traditional way," which on examination proves to be what is known as "Extreme Unction." The steps to that "traditional way" are quite clear; they cover something like six centuries of time from the Council of Chalons, A.D. 813, which decreed that only Priests could anoint, through the Council of Pavia, A.D. 850, which stated that by anointing

“ sins were remitted and therefore sickness healed,” down to the Council of Florence, A.D. 1439, which ordered that Unction was to be administered only as a preparation for the Viaticum. And each of these steps marks a decline from earlier practice, and from earlier doctrine. The earlier practice was that even Unction could be administered by laymen if the oil had been blessed by a bishop ; the earlier doctrine was that Unction was for healing, i.e. in view of life, not of death. And although the reforming Council of Trent in the sixteenth century made an effort to recover the earlier standards, its unfortunate use of the term *oleum exeuntium* to describe Unction practically frustrated that laudable purpose.

Here, then, are matters for discipline both of thought and of practice, and it is largely a question of self-discipline coming to us through the demands of our ministry. We must not shrink either from training in thought, study, prayer, with, if it may be, the help of those with wider experience than ourselves in this ministry ; or from exercising this ministry as opportunity offers if we are to be found faithful stewards. We remember here as in all our ministry that our great duty is to bring men into touch with God, and our high privilege is to bring the power of God into touch with men through His own appointed means, and that duty and that privilege will serve to be the standard of our effort.

All this is of the nature of self-discipline. But

there are other matters to think of as well—our relation in the Ministry of Healing to our bishop ; to the doctor attending the patient ; and our relation to the patient himself.

Our relation to the bishop will best be considered under the head of authorization ; but a word ought to be said on the other two points—our relation to the doctor and to the patient. They both come under the head of discipline.

And here I would ask your attention to the group of words in 1 Corinthians xii., among which gifts of healings stands. They are translated “ miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments.” They all have some reference, I believe, to the work of healing. From New Testament usage I think we may infer that “ miracles ” (*δυνάμεις*) has a special reference to the more spiritual side of man’s nature—to the healing of mental disorders, possession, etc. It is the word which I think is always used in the Gospels to describe our Lord’s miracles in such cases.

Then, gifts of healings (*χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων*) would refer to bodily healing, while *ἀντιλήψεις* (helps) has a distinctly medical connotation, and may rightly be translated nursings, while the crowning gift *κυβερνήσεις* (wise guidance) would point to right direction as to the way to deal with each individual case. The whole group should therefore be considered together, and should form for us the measure of training for this ministry. We shall need then to gain all the knowledge we can from

every source which might be open to us—but not in order that we may become amateur doctors. The doctor is God's minister within the sphere of natural law—we are always to be His ministers in spiritual things, and I would suggest that our preparation for the ministry of healing of the body should be parallel to our preparation for the ministry of healing the soul. Just as the one involves a knowledge of moral theology, so the other should involve—if I may coin a term—some knowledge of physical theology, the laws by which God governs our physical nature. You will remember that our Lord did not always use the same methods of healing. May not the difference in method have been due as much to the different “classes” of disease treated as to the differing degrees of faith in the recipient?

Then as regards the patient. I do not think it would be right, certainly at the present stage, to use Spiritual Healing in any broadcast way. It is difficult to draw conclusions from New Testament usage. Certainly there are occasions when our Lord used it, e.g. when multitudes came and He healed them (cf. S. Matt. ix. 35; xii. 15; xiv. 14-34). Certainly He bids His disciples use it as a *preparation* for the Kingdom. But there are many more instances where He demands some evidence of faith, some attitude of personal reliance on Him. But He is always teaching the people—that is the point. It is never mere miracle working. The

ground work of His teaching is that a new power of help has been made manifest in the world, revealing at length the age-long purposes of God, and, whether it be in healing crowds or curing individuals, that is always the constant factor.

May it not be possible that when He healed large numbers of people He was using—as in other “group miracles”—conditions created by what is to-day known as “group psychology,” the psychology of the crowd, which created special conditions in which the witness of power could be given; when, on the other hand, He healed individuals, there was the necessity for personal faith and expectation in order that that power might be realized and appropriated? True, that group psychology is a factor in “nature” miracles where it generally has no moral colour, but that does not exclude it from our Lord’s use in teaching us of His ways of healing. And it may perhaps be paralleled by the use of the gift of tongues at the Pentecost, and its use afterwards within the Christian body in Corinth. In the one case it witnesses to those without that the Pentecost was a new power given to men. In the other it assured the Church that the power was a real fact, and was not simply the creation of certain psychological conditions. And if it be legitimate to draw this distinction, have we not some guide as to the relation of the corporate faith of the Church, and the faith of a particular individual?

But as things are, for us “the hedging of the

Sacrament " would apply here just as it would apply in the case of other Sacraments. There must be conditions. The attitude of the patient, his preparation for reception of the spiritual gift, the faith that is in him, all this must mean some restraint on our part in ministering the Sacrament of healing. We do not go to him as another specialist called in for consultation ; we do not give him another kind of medicine, more potent than any in his own doctor's surgery ; we go to him as stewards of the mysteries of God to bring his whole personality into touch with Divine Healing and help. And we must needs go with our own personality trained and disciplined and quickened so far as in us lies for this great office. But we go to him because both of us within Christ's Body are within the sphere of operation of His life-giving Spirit ; never as individuals possessing magical powers, but always as sharers together in the grace of life. There ought then to be some way of emphasizing the corporate character of our ministry, and this we may find in the last point in the Ordination Commission : " To minister in the congregation where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto."

(c) *Authorization*.—It is clear, from what has been said, that a very large part of the priest's training and discipline must be undertaken by himself, partly because it has to do so much with his own spiritual outlook and vitality, partly also because it is difficult, almost impossible, at least at the present

stage, to evolve any orderly scheme or system of training, partly again because it is an open question whether such faculties as those we have been considering are susceptible of training apart from the general spiritual education of the priest, and the most potent influence in this education comes, as we know, through personal and practical experience.

So far, it seems that the best help we can suggest would be the use of special Retreat Conferences for clergy, or perhaps for clergy and doctors, or by seeking opportunities to speak on the subject at Ruri-decanal Chapters, and so set the brethren thinking about it. But it would be very important that such work should only be undertaken by properly qualified men, and this would imply some form of authorization, about which I will speak in a moment. I venture to think that it is a matter of real importance that something should be done to bring the subject before candidates for Holy Orders, either in the theological colleges or in the days of Retreat before their ordination. It would turn their thoughts in the right direction, and lead them to expect to exercise this ministry as part of their priesthood. Very much will depend on the results arrived at by the Lambeth Committee on the ministry of healing,¹ but it is of obvious importance that some way should be sought for training those who will themselves become teachers and guides in their turn.

But should we as priests seek authorization for the

¹ The Committee reported in 1923.

work of Spiritual Healing? If the view which has been here set forth is right, we already have authority in the very terms of our Ordination Commission—is anything further necessary? There is no question that if the Ministry of Healing is to be restored to its rightful place in the ordinary life of the Church, some method of corporate recognition must be sought for, and that would naturally come through the action of the bishops. For one thing, it needs to be done for the re-assurance of the laity, for otherwise there will be a real danger of their regarding the whole matter as the whim or fancy or idiosyncrasy of the few. They will altogether miss the meaning of the gift and the right to its exercise as part of the present manifestation of the power of the living Christ at work on their behalf, unless some corporate action is taken. It may not be easy to define much at first, but we have now that opportunity, so rarely given, of laying sound foundations for the future, and there lies on us a duty to the future of the work, the duty of seeing that nothing is left undone by us which will lead to a sound position being developed. And one urgent reason for attempting to formulate some method of regulation is that only in this way shall we be able to guard against the fatal mistake of a class or even a caste of healers becoming the recognized agents of the Church's work. It is probable that such a mistake in the past has contributed more than almost anything else to the cessation of the

Church's work in this direction. Our thought must be first for the regulation of the Ministry of Healing rather than in the first instance the recognition of ministers of healing. I would therefore draw this distinction, as far as concerns the priesthood. We have our authority, I believe, in the terms of our Ordination Commission ; we should not therefore ask for *authority* (in the strict sense) to execute our ministry. But it is part of the Bishop's office to *regulate* any ministry within the Body. That then is what we should aim at and work for. It would, I believe, come within both scriptural and Church sanctions. I would refer again to the charisma *κυβερνήσεις* in 1 Corinthians xii. It is one of a group which refers specifically to a Ministry of Healing, and there is quite good ground for translating it "wise guidings." That would properly belong in large principles to the bishops, as it may also belong in individual application to the priests of the Church. It would mean in such a case expressing the intention of the Church, and this, of course, is of the utmost moment.

Such recognition, for recognition is implied in regulation, would probably involve regulations with regard to Holy Unction, the consecration of the holy oils, their use, whether in private or in Church, their connection with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and an authorized office for Unction. It might eventually reach to some directions by way of "hedging the Sacrament"; the class of

people to whom the help might be given, e.g. whether only to those within the visible communion of the Church or to those also who are outside. Or in course of time it might even be right to ask from the bishops some directions as to the relation in practice between Unction and the laying on of hands, or even some guidance in perplexity as to which form of ministry should be employed in any particular case. This would not probably come about for a long while, but it should be kept in view, and it may be very important in questions which have to do with cases of "possession."

The Church sanction on which the bishop's action may be expected to be based is Canon 72 of 1603, which required "ministers not to exorcise, but by authority." The special occasion for formulating that canon has passed, but two things are to be remembered about it. First, it is part of the local law of the English Church, and would, it is to be supposed, be the basis of episcopal action. It means that the bishop is acknowledged by the Church to have the power of regulating the ministry of exorcism, and therefore, presumably, of the kindred ministry of other kinds of healing. Secondly—and this is important—it does not question the fact of the clergy having the power of exorcism; on the contrary, the canon accepts that fact. It only lays down the law in regard to the authorized exercise of that power within the corporate activity of the Church. It is closely paralleled by the canons and directions with regard to the celebration of

Holy Communion (notably Canon 71, forbidding the celebration of Holy Communion in private houses). Also, it must not be forgotten that the canons (and especially such canons as 72) apply to the work of the priesthood as well as the episcopate, and might rightly form the ground of application to the bishop for due direction and regulation on the part of the priesthood.

It is possible that the bishop would call to his assistance a Council of those who had specially studied the subject much as he so frequently does in other matters affecting the common life of the Church. He might be asked to appoint teachers or directors who could speak with authority in the diocese, and this would seem to be a most important step. He might eventually be asked to sanction rules by which the lives and activities of persons, who feel called to exercise this ministry, might be guided and tested. But it would be of the utmost importance to avoid the creation of an Order of Healers. The tendency to do this might be difficult to resist; but I believe it was because the healing power committed to the Church was in early ages gradually restricted to the order of exorcists that its activity slowly died away. There is very early evidence of the separation of a class of exorcists apart both from the priesthood and from the general body of the laity (Cornelius, *ad Fabianum*, A.D. 251). The tone of Cornelius' letter seems to be one of uneasy regret at a growing discrepancy with earlier use. It is to be noted that though exorcists and

other servants of the Church were said to be in minor orders, there was no "ordination" by laying on of hands. That has always been reserved for the major orders.

There are, of course, only most tentative suggestions for the real revival of this primary activity of the Church, to which the way seems opening to-day. As we think of problems and discuss methods, it will not be out of place to recall that S. Paul, in laying down lines of guidance for the Ephesian elders, does not leave out of sight the Ministry of Healing as part of the Gospel, and he makes use in the "unrecorded saying," "It is better to give than to receive" (Acts xx. 35), of what looks like a popular use of the Lord's recorded words spoken in direct reference to that ministry—"Freely ye have received, freely give."

The condition, the circumstances, the traditions were, as with us, entirely different from anything we can see in the Gospels, but the need is the same as is pictured there, and the same power is unhesitatingly claimed as the measure of opportunity and of duty. Our *principle* must always be that this ministry is part of the Gospel of the Redeeming Lord still helping men through His Body the Church in which His Incarnate power is still enshrined—our *aim*, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

IX. SOME PROBLEMS OF SPIRITUAL HEALING

SPIRITUAL Healing, like all other subjects of Christian faith or practice, has its problems, some of them peculiar to itself, some of them arising from the necessary adjustment between it and other fields of experience. Our understanding of it and its meaning must be slowly progressive. It is salutary to remember this, for it will serve to encourage patience and faith in the pursuit of sound knowledge, and it will keep us from jumping to rash conclusions on insufficient premises or half understood formulæ. Sound knowledge and real progress in other fields of thought are only attained by the discovery and application of true principles, and these principles can only be enunciated after prolonged investigation and testing. Spiritual Healing is, we believe, a reality—our present duty is, therefore, not to put it aside as a product or a phase of popular fancy, nor to confuse its manifestations, but humbly and fearlessly to investigate its meaning and its bearing on the special problems with which it deals. To take an illustration of the present position with regard to it from physical science: there is an interesting parallel in the position in

astronomical science which attended the discovery of the planet Neptune in 1846. The astronomers had long been aware of an unaccountable deflection in the orbit of Uranus, which they had been studying for some sixty years, and it was only when they began to correct their observations in other directions by reference to these deflections, and then to seek for the cause of the deflections themselves, that they discovered a new planet, Neptune, on the confines of the solar system as it was then known. Henceforward this newly discovered planet had to be considered as a real factor in all their calculations with regard to the other planets in the solar system. Their universe, and consequently their sphere of investigation, had grown larger. But it is important to remember that this broadening of the field of knowledge was not due to a sudden irruption of a new force, but to the discovery of the true source of a force which was already there and was exerting an influence on the activity of other forces of which they were already aware.

It would be completely wrong if we regarded Psychical Healing, i.e. "healing without the use of material means," as a new force suddenly irrupted into human experience at the beginning of the Christian era. It was at work in the Temple of Æsculapius as much as it is at work in many psychological clinics to-day. But Spiritual Healing in the Christian sense had a different quality and a new significance. As part of the redemptive work of the

Lord Christ it reached the spiritual centre of man's personality ; it affected his whole relation to God. It was vividly at work in the early days of the Church, and certainly it was a matter of common experience down to the fourth century. Then it suffered a period of eclipse and it has been rediscovered to-day. Its religious eclipse was due, I believe, to some of the exigencies of ecclesiastical history with which we are not immediately concerned. Its re-discovery puts upon us the duty not simply of co-ordinating it with our other knowledge, but also of co-ordinating our other knowledge with it. It is for us the new planet which has to be taken into consideration if the rest of our knowledge in this particular field is not to be falsified.

Here, then, is one of our main problems, the problem of co-ordination. There are many elements which must be considered, many avenues through which the problem may be approached. Our main concern will be to relate those elements or to explore those avenues from the point of view of a churchman's faith. How ought they to be regarded from that point of view ? Is there anything in the faith of the Church which can provide a basis for that synthesis which, in this respect as in others, is becoming more and more urgent to present-day understanding of life ?

The central fact of co-ordination with which we shall be primarily concerned is the relation of the spiritual to the material, and even when we reach

a definition of the problem which is apparently so clear cut as that, we become aware that each term of the definition, so far from being simple, is itself compounded of very various elements. We are not for the moment concerned with scientific definitions, either of matter or of spirit (if, indeed, there can be any scientific "definition" of the latter), but we cannot help noticing that wherever, either in ancient or modern times, their interaction has been sought in the direction of bodily health, it has always been sought along lines of religion—or, if that sounds too like a *petitio principii*, it has always been sought along the lines of wholeness, for which the religious term is holiness. I think, though here I speak under correction, that modern psycho-therapy, since it aims at the harmony of the whole man attained through due regard to the direction of his mental habit, would not quarrel with that position.

The point to be stressed is that the fact of healing, wrought through spiritual rather than through what we call material means, having been so persistent throughout man's history, seems to point to a fundamental condition which merits real study and appears to warrant certain, at least, tentative conclusions. It is this which makes it important to enquire into its relation to the Christian faith or obversely, to ask what interpretation the Christian faith would give of it.

It is quite aside the point to urge that dependence on non-material means of healing is distinctive of a

very early stage in the evolution of human thought. The phenomenon is much too persistent long after those early stages have been passed to be thus summarily dismissed. It is equally beside the mark to argue that twentieth century manifestations of this tendency are simply retrogressions towards the magic of the dark ages. For the twentieth century has been more richly productive of non-material methods of healing, which are capable of being subjected to scientific tests, than any immediately preceding century of time. That it may be regarded as a retrogression from the religious point of view, may possibly depend on whether the Divine Incarnation or primitive animism be accepted as the true interpretation of man's relation to the forces of the spiritual world.

Put broadly, the centre lies in Personality. It is impossible to think of any process being merely mechanical or automatic when that process involves the whole personality. It seems even impossible to think of forces simply in the abstract—especially what we call “spiritual forces”—when they have to do with personality as a whole. That would be, within this particular sphere, to draw the old sharp distinction between personality and experience which recent thought tends to disallow. As Bergson teaches us, “we are creating ourselves continually,” and what he calls the *élan vital* is perpetually expressing itself through ceaseless changes. That is to say that personality itself becomes and is a

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medium through which and in which the *élan vital*
as a whole expresses itself.

It is obvious, since our personality is a complete entity, that no interpretation of that movement which is confined to one element alone of personality—e.g. the intellectual element alone, or the spiritual element alone (if we can so far differentiate them) will be completely valid. Here again we come on the problem of co-ordination—how to bring together the different elements of experience and knowledge so that there shall be no contradiction, but that each element shall have its due place in a harmonious whole.

It is along such lines as these that some of the deepest problems of Spiritual Healing lie, and the true synthesis can only be sought in very humble readiness to accept real discipline of thought, and thus slowly to move on step by step towards a fuller understanding. But we must not confine ourselves in this investigation to any one aspect of the problem—e.g. simply the intellectual, or simply the philosophical, or even what we must call simply that of religious experience. We have to think out the whole problem, not only for ourselves, but for the guidance of others, and while we remember that the wonder of Spiritual Healing may appeal to many men in many ways, we have to take care to test any advice we may be able to give them so that as far as in us lies it shall be founded on the truth. And in this respect Christian belief has a quite specific

contribution to make. Faith is not to be confounded with credulity, but it is not to be reduced to mere intellectual acquiescence. It is, indeed, an operation of the *élan vital* at its very highest level, for it is the road along which all the powers of personality move towards their source and end, God, the Eternal Personality. "In Him we live and move and have our being," and in that journey towards fulfilment the problems of the spirit become dominant. We sum them up, perhaps, somewhat lamely when we speak of them as the problems of faith, by which we mean the problems (as they appear to us) of God's action in regard to the spirit of man—action, that is, not regarded as external to man, but as the great lifegiving power within him. We catch a glimpse of our main problem of co-ordination even here, but in visualizing it on this new level we become aware of the contribution which theology (i.e. the action of the intellect in the sphere of spiritual truth) can make to its solution. It is, e.g. a difficulty in the minds of some people how to "place" the religious fact of faith in Jesus Christ, and the consequences of that faith as a reality in their perception of the psychological make-up of mankind. Christ is one Person—I am another. How does faith in Christ really affect my personality? How can anyone or anything outside myself vitally affect me? The psychological answer would be sought in the field of the emotions. To seek it along rational lines simply, would be in-

sufficient. And it is a very great gain to the understanding of the effects of the Christian faith upon the individual that the emotions are now recognized as being among the most deep seated and important faculties of our nature. But to confine ourselves to the answer which the emotions might supply to our question would be extraordinarily inadequate. It would only tell us a very small part of what Christ means to Christian people. There is something so vitally real in His relation to us that any definition of it is poor and jejune. And above all we have to remember that valuable as psychology is, it is concerned wholly with the functions of the human mind, and it is necessarily, therefore, concerned within its own measure only with the *effect* of faith, and not with its origin or its object.

And though it is true in psychology that heterosuggestion is ineffective until it is so completely accepted that it becomes auto-suggestion, and it is true in the sphere of religious faith that merely intellectual belief—i.e. knowledge about Christ—is ineffective in its influence on personality until it has become belief in Christ, yet even so, that is only a step towards the fulness of the life in Christ which is the meaning of Christianity. Moreover, it is only a step on the human side, and does not take account, at least formally, of the Divine action on the other side. But Christian belief has always held that to be the primary and fundamental thing.

Before we pass from this simple thought of what may be called a psychological aspect of Christian faith, it is worth while remembering that the Church is not ignorant of the use of psychological methods. It is apparent in her penitential discipline. The penitent is taught to face the facts of his life—of himself. He is taught the necessity for re-directing his will. But where the Church can go further than science is just in this, that the penitent is not left to face the facts alone, nor to start on the new effort only in his own strength, or even by the aid of powerful suggestion. And in absolution he does not receive remission of guilt, but remission of sins. A power reaches him which is not himself, and it is not the creation of suggestion. But we note that while the forgiveness of his sins is of the most vital moment in the spiritual life of the penitent, the sense of freedom which this brings to him is of no less vital importance to him psychologically. Here, perhaps, is a point where co-ordination of our knowledge in these differing lines of experience may come most closely into touch, and may indicate lines of further progress.

When we put the matter to ourselves in this way we become aware again of the magnitude of our problem. It demands devotion in thought as well as in aspiration, and it must be devotion to the truth. And there is nothing more urgent at the moment than patient careful thought and patient careful teaching. What then have

we to work on? What then have we to build on?

It is only clearing the ground, but it is important to remember (as Dr. Rivers reminds us in his posthumous book, "Medicine, Magic and Religion") that the materialistic view of scientific phenomena was part of a wave which swept over the whole intellectual outlook of the nineteenth century. It was a result and consequence of much research along new roads of investigation. But it was in the nature of a cross current. It was a new explanation of already observed phenomena looked at from a new point of view. But to-day the tendency is towards non-material, or "spiritual" causes. Even though the atom be a philosophic conception, it is a conception in material terms, while the electron, still only a philosophic conception, is a conception in terms of force—that is, so far, a "spiritual" conception. This difference of outlook seems to bring science and religion immeasurably nearer than seemed possible, say, fifty years ago.

A main difficulty, however, is that science is rightly reluctant to admit anything "irruptive" into the category of valid causes. But, on the surface, an irruptive cause seems to be of supreme importance in religion. We habitually think of the origin of our salvation as outside ourselves and, therefore, "irruptive" in its action upon us.

We should not—we could not—allow e.g. that the Holy Spirit is a creation of the human mind. He is

a Person distinct and separate from ourselves, and, therefore, any action He may bring to bear upon us—however formative of character—is inevitably thought of in irruptive rather than in evolutionary terms. It is well to remember that this condition applies to the whole content of the Christian faith, and not only to that particular detail of Christian life which we are now considering.

Both science and religion would acknowledge a Transcendent Power—"Science demands creative intelligence" was the teaching of the late Lord Kelvin—but while religion concerns itself especially with the relation of man to God on the spiritual plane, and, therefore, with God's self-revelation on that plane, science is concerned, in this respect, with the evolution of the faculties in man by which that self-revelation of God is appropriated and apprehended. She traces the stages of his growth as slowly he reaches out towards the Infinite which religion knows as God. And both science and religion have something to give which is infinitely important to the understanding of God or man or life. "A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?"

But it is fatal to any true synthesis to confuse the lines of work. It is only as real knowledge is attained in either field that we can fit our parts of the puzzle together and find that they make a complete and coherent whole. And quite clearly each group of thinkers converge upon the same

point, for both are seeking to know, both are learning to understand not simply "things in themselves," but things in relation to each other and, above all, in relation to the Great First Cause, God. And perhaps we may think of ourselves as lifted by religion to a higher level of being in which we reach a new understanding of that relation. Only on this level do we discover that the faith of men has a necessary part of the fulfilment of God's purposes, for by its operation obstacles are removed which actually and actively retard or even withstand His will for good. Life is a larger thing than as we see it, and there are causes and consequences which lie beyond the reach of the strictest and most exacting analysis, but which are yet of most complete validity in human experience. Long ago William James taught us that there are faculties of human personality by which man is in touch with the "more" that is outside of him, and that the truth conveyed by those faculties is as real and valid as the truth conveyed by any other faculties of his nature.

There are, of course, problems connected with Spiritual Healing which touch life at both these points, and it is here that the opportunity of building a synthesis will come in. We are moving towards it, but it is not clear yet. And it is of the first importance that we should make sure of our principles. The main ground on which the work of Spiritual Healing can be undertaken at all is the deep

conviction that, when our Lord sent out the seventy to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom of power, giving them His authority to heal the sick, and when He commissioned the twelve for the same work before His Ascension, He was definitely linking men with His own peculiar work of saving men, body and soul, from the power of evil. The miracles of the New Testament, regarded from this point of view, are definitely part of His redemptive work. In Him the operation of spiritual power is unimpeded, using His perfect human nature as its ready instrument. But we should be quite wrong if we thought that no problems presented themselves to His mind in dealing with human suffering as distinct from human sin—that He had only to speak and it was done. On the contrary, He seems to be conscious of conditions which must be taken into account, conditions, too, which lie beyond the unaided vision of men. How else can we attempt to account for the delay in going to Lazarus, or how explain the miracle of the blind man who saw men as trees walking? (S. Mark viii. 25.) They seem to hint at a conflict in which even He conquers only by the exercise of indomitable faith.

The point to be observed is that, judging not only from His directions to His disciples, but from His careful training of them in the laws of spiritual reality, it is His will to continue through them this operation of power affecting even the physical life of men. We have grown so accustomed in modern

times to think of man's part in the proclamation of the Gospel as being confined to the delivery of the message, leaving the rest to God, that it is difficult for us to realize that the Lord Christ called His disciples to something much more positive, much more constructive in founding and building up His Kingdom.

Yet, in fact, we do see the early disciples and the early Church doing the same things as He did in fulfilling His command for the extension of the Kingdom. We know that the actual words of promise are only found in the appendix to S. Mark, and, if they stood alone, might therefore be thought of doubtful authenticity, but in the Acts, for instance, we find the Apostles acting in fact as if those words had authority for them, with results which seem to show that the Apostles were right in their conviction. That is not evidence of an unrelated irruption ; is it not evidence rather of a newly perceived law, operating as a consequence of the Union of the Divine and the human established by the Incarnation of the Lord Christ ? And the evidence of the operation of this " new " law in the relation between God and man is as clear in the New Testament as the evidence of the " new " law of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon individual members of Christ's Body in Confirmation, and the link with the Gospels is even clearer. But, at any rate, we do see men in the New Testament claiming and exercising power to help the bodies as well as the

souls of men, and we do see such a teacher as S. Paul unhesitatingly claiming that this power to help men's bodies and minds is a power ordained of God.

And it is a power of *restoration*, not of rejuvenation ; that is to say that, as far as bodily powers are concerned, it is a recovery of something which has been lost and which, by its loss, has involved inability to fulfil the purpose of life as it is to be lived now. It so far differs from that gift which, associated as it is with man's life on the spiritual plane, makes him, in S. Paul's phrase, " a new creation." But it is not less a spiritual gift on this account, nor does it less truly operate from the spiritual centre of man's nature. It is not without significance that the Apostle's clearest exposition of the spiritual gifts, including the gifts of healing, and their place in Christian life, is given to the Corinthians—to people whose lives were closely in touch with the cult of Apollo, the god of physical strength and beauty—and probably in answer to questions which arose in connection with that cult. While the language of his reply defines the gifts of healing within the Church as part of the ordinance of God, it does not on that account reduce the meaning of the gifts to a merely local or temporary experience.

And it is equally significant that these gifts are specifically described as part of the equipment of the Body of Christ, that is, an instrument of Christ's power with a definitely human expression and definitely in touch with life on its material side.

But obviously conditions have changed since then. The very setting of our lives differs from the setting of those days. There has been a vast increase in knowledge; to some it seems that there has been an almost corresponding decline in faith. These things are sometimes urged as reasons for hesitating to admit the reality of Spiritual Healing to-day. But whether those objections, so far as they go, be relevant or not, they do not touch the main question. Have these changed conditions affected the *principle*? Certainly, if we believe—and as Christians we surely must believe—that the search for truth in any and every direction is an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, then it will be impossible for us to think on the one hand that this clear indication of the will of God, which in its primary stage came to us through Christ the Lord, is a mere *ignis fatuus*, or, on the other hand, to believe that the principles which, as we are slowly learning, operate in the field of science—which is one aspect of God's truth—can contradict the principles which are at work in another aspect of the truth of the same God in another sphere of His self-revelation.

It is supremely a matter for co-ordination, and we Christian folk need to catch something of the infinite patience of science if we are to reach anything like a worthy rationale of Spiritual Healing. For this reason we must test and test again our methods of procedure. Faith in the love and the power of God in Christ is the spring of action and of purpose,

but how that love and power wills to work through instruments which are at the best imperfect is a matter for most humble advance in experience. There is certainly one note which is never absent in the New Testament when merely human instruments are being used in this great work—it is the note of corporate faith—and wherever formal directions are given they move along lines of corporate action. Corporate faith and corporate action we shall need, but it must be the faith and action of the Church, not the impulse of the crowd. And corporate consciousness must be trained through individuals learning, however slowly, to understand their own relation to and share in that Body through which we believe the Spirit of God still works for the whole redemption of the whole man. We recognize that the gift of healing is sacramental in character, for it is an “extension of the Incarnation,” as are the other Sacraments. We recognize its likeness to other Sacraments in its restricted intention. It belongs to “the ministry of the Holy Sacraments” in the Church, rather than to the “ministry of the word,” and the recognition of this fact will itself indicate the methods both of preparation and of use with which it will be approached.

Bodily health will become then a matter contingent on the will of God for our duty to Him in the world. It lies, it is true, only on the circumference of a life of which the centre is the spirit; but the circumference has a true relation to the centre,

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